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HE-PRACTICAL HOTOGRAPHER

(LIBRARY SERIES)

EDITED BY REV. F. C.LAMBERT. MA



NUMBER 16

The Pictorial Work of Bernard Alfieri.

Pictorial Composition

Ву . .

G. A. Storey, A.R.A.,
Arthur Burchett,
Horace Mummery,
Eustace Calland,
F. C. Moore,

and Others.



58 Illustrations.

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The Practical Photographer.

Library Series. Pictorial Composition.

No. 16.

PAGES

Principal Contents.

The Pictorial Work of Bernard Alfieri, with an Essay by the Editor. (Six illustrations)

Prelin	inary Questions and A	inswers,	by the E	ditor	-	-	-	-	6
The P	rinciples of Compositio	n, by Ai	rthur Bu	${f rchett}$	-	-	-	-	8
	of Composition in Lan			e Mur	nmer	·y	-	-	19
	on Composition, by Eu			<u> </u>	-	-	-	-	29
	sition in Painting and			G. A.	Stor	өу, А	R.	1.	39
Thoug	hts on Composition, by	y F. C. M	Ioore	-	-	-	40	-	45
The A	rrangement of the For	eground	, by F. C	. L.	-	-	-	~	47
some.	Pictoriai Gieanings iro	\mathbf{m} the Π	lustratio	ns in t	this V	7olui	ne, b	y	
th	e Editor - - -			-	-	-	-	-	52
×									
	-								
	-								
	1)	llustrat	ions.						
FIGUR	FC					FACI	NG F	A G	RN
		D 416	•						
	Her First Sermon."	B. Allie	eri -	-	-	- L L	ontis	pre	
	The Derelict."	,,	-	-	-	-	• .	•	8
3. "	Sunset."	,,	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4. "	Rain on Burgh Marsh.	,,	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
	Sea Harvesters."	,,	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
6. "	Against the Sky."	,,		~ •	-	-	-	-	16
7. "	The Constable's Tower	, Conwa	y." A. (Coles	- TT	- 1	-	est.	17
8, 9.	"From Transept to N	ave, Wii		" S.	G. K.	ımbe	r	-	20
	Walberswick." W. J.			-	-	-	-	-	21
	Roydon Bridge." G. V				-	-	-	-	24
12. "	A Native Grace," etc.	C. J. Ha	ankinson	-	-	-	-	-	25
13. ''	May." Hilda Stevenso The Fringe of the Woo A Wee Mother." H. V	on -		-	-	-	-	-	28
14. '''	The Fringe of the Woo	od." A.	S. Upsor	1 -	-	-	-	-	29
15. ".	A Wee Mother." H. V	V. Dick		-	-	-	-	-	32
16. ".	A Riverside Landscape	e." E. S	. Griffith	S -	-	-	-	-	33
17. "	Dovedale." H. Light			-	-	-	-	-	36
18. "	In the North Transept,	York."	W. G.	Hill	-	-	-	-	40
19. ".	A Golden Dawn." W.	J. Appl	ebv -	-	-	-	-	-	41
20. '''	The Shower." H. P. V	Vight		-	-	-	-	-,	44
21. '''	The Crypt, Durham."	J. J. Ru	itherford	l -	-	-	-	-	45
22, 23,	24. Foreground Studi	es.	F. C. La	${f mbert}$	-	-	-	-	48
25, 26.	,, ,,		,		-	-	-	-	49
27, 28.	,, ,,		,		-	-		-	52
29, 30.			,		-	-	-	-	53
31, 32.	Long v. Short Focal I	ength o	f Lens.,	,	-	-	-	-	56
33, 34.	Studies in Focussing.	•	,		-	-	-		57
35, 36.	Ortho- v. Ordinary Pl		,		-	-	-		60
37, 38.	Up- and Down-Hill E		,,		•	•	-	-	61

Editorial and other Notes.

Contents of Our Next Number.

Our next number (ready February 1st, 1905) will deal in an exhaustive, practical and suggestive manner with The Photography of Animals.

Other numbers in active preparation will deal with Gumbichromate Printing, Portraiture, Flowers, Marine and Seascape, Clouds, Genre, Lenses, Night Photography, Chemistry, Orthochromatic Photography, Telephotography, Ozotype, Iron Printing Processes, Optical Lantern, Stereoscopy, Flash-light Work, Finishing the Print, Combination Printing, Pictorial Composition, Photo-micrography, Figure Studies, Copying, etc.

N.B.—Will readers who feel disposed to co-operate in the preparation of any of the above numbers kindly communicate with the Editor forthwith $\ref{eq:communicate}$

Criticism of Prints.

It is our desire to make the criticism of prints a special feature in our pages. The Editor gives his personal careful attention to this matter, and aims at making every criticism a practical, interesting, and instructive object-lesson. By paying attention to the hints thus given, often a poor print may be improved and a good print followed by one still better. In order to encourage readers to take great care in the preparation of the prints they send us, we offer **Three Prizes of Five Shillings** each, for the three best prints sent in each month. The winning prints will not be returned. (See Coupon).

Pictures for Exhibitions.

To meet the convenience of those readers who are preparing prints for special dates (exhibitions, etc.), and cannot conveniently wait for printed criticism in our columns, we have arranged that readers may send us one, two or three prints with the usual Print Criticism Coupon and a fee of one shilling for each print sent. Within a week the prints, accompanied by a criticism, will be returned to the sender. The return postage must be prepaid in the usual way as in Rule 5. (See page v.) The fee must be sent with a letter (marked "Print Criticism Special") and coupon to the Editor, and not enclosed with the prints. Each print must bear on the back the name and address of the sender.

Notice.

Will competitors please notice that the latest date for receiving prints for our competitions is that given on the coupon, and that we cannot admit late arrivals?

Out of Print!

In answer to numerous correspondents we beg to say that No. 1 (Bromide Printing), No. 2 (Bromide Enlarging), No. 5 (P.O.P.), and No. 6 (Developing and Developers) are now out of print. Also that our stock of the majority of the other back numbers is running very low, so that any one wishing to possess a complete set of the present Library Series should secure the needed numbers to fill up the gaps in his series without a moment's delay.

Will anyone who has any of the "out of print" Numbers for disposal communicate with us, as we are constantly receiving enquiries from sub-

scribers wishing to complete their Series.

A Novel Competition.

Vide page v.

Carbon Competition: Awards.

Silver Plaque.—J. H. Saunders, "All amid the rigours of the year, etc. Bronze Plaque.—B. Robertson, "An Old Corner in York."

Certificates.—W. Firth, "Entrance to the Keep-Kenilworth"; Mrs. Mason, "Contentment"; G. Gorton "A Reverie"; W. H. Roberts, "An Autumn morning."

Highly Commended.—S. A. Houghton, B. B. M. Olivera, F. Nicholson, A. E. Burnett, W. Maitland, Miss Walker, T. Carlisle, E. Hoppe, W. Baron, F. W. Hodgetts, W. J. Heathcoate.

Print Criticisms: Awards.

First Prize.—E. Hoppe, "A Study in Gray."

The other Two Prizes have been divided between A. F. Porter, "It is growing dusk, etc."; W. R. Nutman, "Mid-day"; F. G. Price, "Declining from the noon of day, the sun obliquely shoots his burning ray"; C. B. Alexander, "Sunrise on the Thames."

Highly Commended.—J. H. Saunders, W. Maitland, D. Coventry. F. S. Hunter, Miss Tate, J. Archer, G. E. Frere.

Junior Salon: Awards.

The average quality of work sent in to this Competition is considerably higher than that submitted on previous occasions. Consequently the competition was more severe and *ergo* the victors are all the more to be congratulated. All those whose names appear on this page sent in work which calls for our hearty congratulations.

Silver Plaque.—Miss Hilda Stevenson for three Portrait Studies of exceptional Merit.

Bronze Plaques.—H. P. Wight, "The Shower"; W. H. Witts, "The Embankment at Night"; B. Jackson, "A Study in Pose"; J. J. Rutherford, "Across the Nave, York"; T. R. Somerford, "St. Pauls."

Certificates — W. J. Appleby, "Cattle Study"; C. J. Hankinson, "A Native Grace, etc."; J. J. C. Shelly, "Cactus Dahlia"; A. S. Upson, "The Fringe of the Wood"; H. G. Staddon, "Nature's Déshabille"; Rev. H. W. Dick, "A Wee Mother"; R. Marshall, "As the sun sinks in the West."

Highly Commended.—J. F. Wilde, W. H. Nithsdale, J. W. P. Norton, J. M. Wale, E. Cudworth, W. R. Davis, H. Preston, C. J. P. Cave, J. J. Rothwell, R, Low, W. Bradbury, E. G. Fellows, B. Schon, J. Brooks, H. J. Blane, F. G. Price, H. J. Saunders, C. C. S. Parsons, J. Harbottle, G. A. Fowkes, A. Cohen, J. H. Wilson, E. T. Clark, W. Maitland, C. Walker, Mrs. H. Morgan, J. Phillipson, S. Swinden, W. H. House, A. Haynes, H. Rosenbaum, R. Berry, F. A. Jordan, O. W. F. Thomas, S. Lister, J. B. Richardson, W. J. Hann, Miss Leith, Miss Woodward.

Notice - Queries.

In response to numerous requests from our correspondents we have pleasure to announce that we will do our best as far as space permits to reply to queries of a photographic nature. Will querists please (1) write plainly, (2) on one side of the paper, (3) as briefly as is consistent with clearness, and (4) give us the indulgence of their kind patience?

An Explanation.

Will competitors please bear in mind (1) that the judging and criticism cannot be done until after the closing date of the competition, (2) that we go to press before the 25th of the month, and (3) that the criticism of a large number of prints takes considerable time.



This Coupon Expires Jan. 31st, 1905.

THE PRACTICAL PHOTOGRAPHER. COUPON No. 34.

Prints for Criticism (or Queries). RULES.

 Write legibly, on one side of the paper only.
 Put your name, address, and a number on the back of each print, and enclose this coupon.

3. Do not send more than three prints with one coupon.
4. State the Month, Hour, Light, Plate Speed, Stop, Exposure, Developer, Printing and Toning process employed.

5. If prints are to be returned, a stamped and addressed label or envelope must be sent with the prints.

6. The Editor reserves the right of reproducing any print sent in for criticism.

7. Prints should be addressed:—The Editor of The Practical Photographer (Print Criticism), 27, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.



THE PRACTICAL PHOTOGRAPHER.

COUPON No. 35.

Composition Competition.

NameAddress

> WRITE LEGIBLY. This Coupon Expires Feb. 25th, 1905.

Composition Competition.

A Silver, and Bronze Plaque, and Certificates will be placed at the disposal of the Judges.

This Competition is designed to draw attention to the study of Pictorial Composition. The prints sent in must be in pairs. The pair must show (practically) the same subject from a different view point, or with different foreground, or different grouping, different sky and cloud, with or without figures, etc.

Competitors may submit one, two or three pairs of prints. The pairs may be on the same or different mounts at the option of the sender.

3. The Competitor must state on the back of each pair the print he prefers, giving (very briefly) the reason.

Marks will be assigned for Originality of Treatment.

Each print should be mounted and bear on the back the name and address of the competitor.

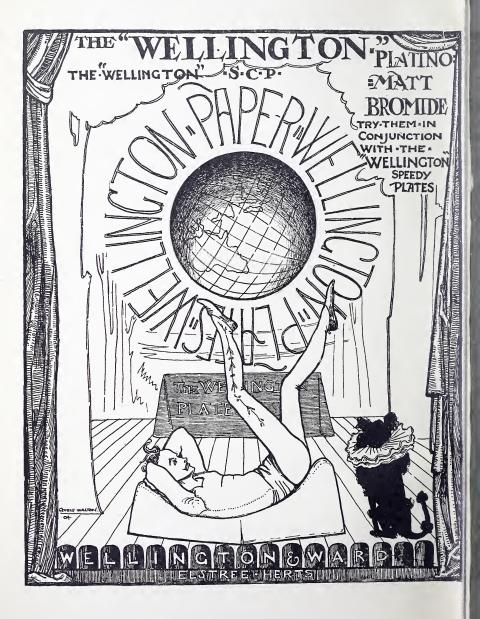
Marks will be given for technical and pictorial quality. The mounting 6. and titling will also be taken into account.

The Editor reserves the right to reproduce any prints sent in to this 7. competition.

The Winning Prints will not be returned. Others will be returned, together with a brief criticism, if a stamped and addressed envelope or label be sent with the prints.

Prints must reach us not later than Feb. 25th, 1905, addressed:

The Editor of The Practical Photographer (Composition Competition), 27, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.









B, Alfferi

FIRST SERMON.

Library Series.

No. 16.

The Pictorial Work of Bernard Alfieri.

By THE EDITOR.

M T

R. BERNARD ALFIERI is in many ways a man to be envied by his brother photographers. In the first place he had for his father one of the best known amateurs of some thirty years ago. In those days almost the only process was wet collodion, with its many difficulties and drawbacks. Alfieri filius

still retains a lively recollection of some of the discomforts of needful but uncomfortable portable dark-room or tent, hot from the sun's warmth and stuffy from the ether vapour constantly evaporating with every opening of the collodion bottle. And as Alfieri pater was an enthusiast working 12×10 negatives, the porterage of baths, dishes, water, and the hundred and one necessities of those days was no light or trifling matter, especially when outside help in the shape of porterage could not be obtained while tramping in search of the picturesque. The amateur photographer of those days took to his hobby con amore and in nearly every case was a more or less remote connection of the *genus* of "geniuses," inasmuch as a high measure of care and attention to small matters was quite essential to success. The present writer may quote a passage in a letter recently received from the subject of this note. "My father used, of

course, to sensitize his own paper, and some silver prints, made at least forty years ago, are still almost as bright and fresh as on the day they were made. This I attribute to the thorough fixing and equally thorough washing, for my father used to dab with a sponge each individual print, supported on a sheet of glass, under the tap for about half an hour. At the present time I know of no more efficacious method of getting rid of all traces of hypo." This is, of course, but one of many instances which one might equally well quote as showing the care and thoroughness of the last generation of amateur photographers. In these days when no home is complete without a sewing machine, a bicycle and a camera there is a dangerous tendency to think only of turning out prints in quantity rather than of fine quality.

Another reason for our envy is that young Alfieri was a pupil in one of the best-known art training schools in the kingdom, and went through the curriculum with very considerable credit. A training of this kind enables one to take a wider view of art work generally. Indeed it is a great pity that many of our present day would-be-pictorial-photographers do not devote a little time to the practical study of, let us say, designing, modelling in clay, drawing from models, etc.

But perhaps Mr. Alfieri's strongest art tendency lay in the direction of music. To this art he has devoted considerable attention under some of the most prominent exponents of the day. But to return to "our muttons." From the time Alfieri left home he lost sight of photography for some ten or twelve years, but took it up again in company with two or three intimate friends who, like our Artist, are present-day "links" in the magic ring. Mr. Alfieri at that time and subsequently chiefly devoted his attention to what one may call lowland pastoral subjects, and he still prefers the open flat lands of Norfolk or Essex to the uplands of Derbyshire or Cumberland.

Writing on the subject of painting, Mr. Alfieri says: "I do not know whether I have any favourite painters, but I have a preference for Peter de Wint and George Mason, both of whom were Staffordshire

THE PICTORIAL WORK OF BERNARD ALFIERI.

men, and coming from localities with which I have been associated and interested ever since my boyhood. Among modern painters I think that Alfred East and George Clausen appeal to me more than

any other present-day workers.".

We have already said enough to show that the subject of this note is a man of many parts. But we must yet add another hobby which is perhaps the one which above all others engages his keenest interest and enthusiasm. Mr. Alfieri is first and foremost a fisherman. First comes fly fishing, next is spinning for jack, and then τα λοιπα, any other kind of fishing whatever. And moreover it may be said in him we have not only an expert, but an authority. In brief, as was said of a celebrated judge, mutatis mutandis, what Alfieri does not know about fishing is not worth knowing.

Most of the pictures herewith reproduced are already known through having been seen on the walls of the Salon and elsewhere. Nevertheless a good picture, like a desirable friend, improves on

further acquaintance.

"The Derelict."—This picture was taken on Breydon Water, near Yarmouth, late one evening. It is a composition which well illustrates the force of a simple subject. This old boat in its forsaken lonely condition is happily placed, and at once engages our interest. The sentiment suggested by the end of the life of this old seagoing worthy is happily echoed by the declining hours of the day, when the setting sun draws round his couch the cloud curtains of the coming night. The student should not fail to note the shore line leading up to the focus of interest in the picture, and how its ever varying curvature gives it an attractive grace and force. (Fig. 2.)

"Sunset."—Here is another evening effect, yet entirely different in setting and sentiment. This lowland pastoral takes us to a bit of flat-land not far from Tilbury. Some of our readers may be inclined to comment upon the dark part of the tree foliage in the right upper corner. But this is due more to our small reproduction than the very much larger original. It should be noted that the

one sheep nearest to us and somewhat separated from the rest of the flock, performs a very useful part in the composition; first by nearness and consequent size helping materially in the suggestion of distance, and secondly forming a connecting link as it were between the spectator and the chief theme of the picture. This may readily be seen if we cover up this animal with a finger for a moment. The peep of distance seen through the trees is a small but important part of this attractive composition. (Fig. 3.)

"Rain on Burgh Marsh" is a subject of quite a different character, and one which our artist has wisely treated in a very different manner. Here we have the general sentiment of "wintry winds and driving showers" admirably expressed. The picture well illustrates the very desirable quality of harmony or oneness. That is to say, we get our impression not from any one part of the picture, but from it as a whole. In a case of this kind precision of form, sharp outline or trenchant detail would at once make us say that it was not true to the title or the general conditions of the state of weather. (Fig. 4.)

"Against the Sky" brings us back again to one of the author's favourite subjects—viz., sheep, horses, cattle and the like amid suitable surroundings. With atmospheric conditions such as are indicated by the sky and clouds, the forms are here quite truthfully outlined sharp and clear against the sky. The near foreground is wisely kept simple and quiet in tone so as not to conflict with the horse and man amid the friendly flock. The small group of sheep which we partly see as they are passing over the hill crest in front of the horse are an apt

instance of suggested space. (Fig. 6.)

"Sea Harvesters."—This, like one of the pictures just mentioned, will serve to show the truth of what we stated in the preceding number* of this series, viz., that the pictorial photographer finds many, perhaps most, of his subject matter, on stormy days or at those seasons of the year when the beginner has put away his camera until his

^{* &}quot;Winter Work," The Practical Photographer, No. 15.



Fig. 2 (p. 3).





THE PICTORIAL WORK OF BERNARD ALFIERI.

next midsummer holiday comes round. This picture is again an apt example of the force of an entirely simple subject, repeating the valuable lesson of "The Derelict," and reveals to us one of Mr. Alfieri's secrets of success. The violent muscular action of the leading horse tells us how the heavy-laden cart has sunk in the yielding sand and shingle. Much of the interest of this picture depends upon the threatening driving storm clouds. The picture is an instructive example showing how sentiment may be conveyed by a strongly characterised sky, and at the same time duly subordinating other portions of the picture to the

sky. (Fig. 5.)

"Her First Sermon."—We have already seen that Mr. Alfieri is a many-sided worker, and has not confined himself to one class of subject or style of treatment. In this entirely attractive and engaging figure study we have yet another glimpse of his wide sympathies. This picture is in itself quite a rich lesson in figure treatment. The technical skill in rendering of flesh and draperies shows an old hand. The happy choice of background, the pose of the figure, childlike, unconscious folding of the hands, the poise of the head and trying-to-be-good-and-listen-to-the-sermon expression are matters for our study, as well as congratulations to the artist. (Fig. 1.) This sympathetically treated study recalls the poet's lines:—

"A truthful page in childhood's lovely face
Whereon sweet Innocence has record made,—
An outward semblance of the young heart's grace
Where truth, and love, and trust are all portrayed."

Taking a rapid and comprehensive glance over the several examples just annotated *singulatim*, we gather theimpression that they are characterised by simplicity of arrangement, and freedom from mannerism or affectation. It would not be easy to find two more useful lessons for the would-bepictorial photographer.

The writer feels sure that he is expressing the reader's wish as well as his own, when he mingles with his hearty thanks to Mr. Alfieri the hope that the near future may contain sufficient leisure to enable our artist to return to his camera and give

us more of his charming and varied pictures.

Preliminary Questions and Answers.† By THE EDITOR.

What is Art?

ITH much truth we may call Art the language that appeals to us through the eye, as spoken language appeals to us through the ear. Words are audible symbols of thoughts. So lines, forms, light and shade, colour, and so on are visible symbols not only

of things, but of our ideas and thoughts about these things. As the speaker conveys thoughts from his own mind about ideas and things by means of tongue and ear, so the draughtsman conveys thoughts by means of the hand and eye.

Need we study composition? It has been urged that as most people can "get along" fairly well with their everyday writing, speaking and reading, so the photographer can "get along all right without bothering about composition." No doubt he can "get along" in a certain manner, just as many people, whose conversation and writing are as scrappy and disconnected as the miscellaneous "lots" in an auctioneer's catalogue, can "get along." But if he has ambitions—wishes to do front-rank pictorial work—he certainly cannot afford to neglect the study of the grammar of his art.

What is the object of composition?

One often hears "the man in the street" saying "I can make myself understand all right when I write a letter without composition which I

don't understand." Possibly his correspondents do not always understand these compositions, in spite of the boldness of their writer. Now the orator or author aims at conveying his ideas, with clearness and conviction, to the minds of his auditors or readers. He therefore studies "past-masters" and assimilates those of their phrases and arguments which appeal to him. His aim is, or should be, not so much to copy or imitate as to discover the secret

 \dagger The reader is advised to refresh his memory by glancing at pages 30-40 in No. 11, "Landscape Photography," of the present series.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

of their success, so that he may sharpen the

weapons in his own armoury.

In each nation there is a general What are concensus as to certain words laws of meaning certain things, and the use composition? of certain groupings of words into sentences and phrases; while a considerable measure of personal liberty and variations is general. But if the liberty or variations transcend customary limits the result is condemned as ungrammatical, and is frequently unintelligible as well. A study of the best spoken or written compositions of a language enables us to deduce that while each writer has his own characteristic style, favourite words and phrases, etc., yet all are in virtual agreement as regards various broad principles of arrangement of sentences, etc. Similarly if we study the pictures of the world's great artists we find that while each worker has his favourite subjects, and methods of treatment, yet there are certain broad and general principles common to all, which it has, unfortunately, become customary to speak of as "laws of composition." Were the phrase not so cumbersome it would be better to call these laws "the general principles of selection and arrangement."

Will a knowledge of composition enable one to "make pictures"? No! For pictures are not made like puddings—according to a recipe. And even if one knew the cookery book off by heart this would not of necessity make one a good cook. Reverting again to our simile, a man may be able to write

a copper-plate hand, spell faultlessly, put sentences together grammatically, and yet be devoid of ideas, logic, fancy, invention. In a word, if he had something worth saying he could say it, but he has

nothing to say.

Finally we may say that while knowledge of composition does not enable us to make pictures unless we have the artistic temperament, yet every picture of even moderate merit must be in accordance with certain broad and general principles whether its author unconsciously or consciously so selected and arranged his material.

The Principles of Composition.

By ARTHUR BURCHETT.

N Photography as in Painting, the man who attempts to express his idea of the beautiful without having learnt the Grammar of Art can never (except by accident) make others see the beauties he attempts to portray. There are certain conventionalities that from long use are requisite in all arts

to produce a pleasing result. In music, we have scales, chords and harmonies, etc. If these are absent the result is only noise and discord. The artist who paints pictures has conventialities. If he neglects these his work can hardly be pleasing to one who sees in it nothing but discord.

Painting and Photography are akin to one another in a sense that they are both pictorial, both follow the same rules with regard to composition, light and shade, both endeavour to portray the beauties and grandeur of nature, both are dependent upon the mind and knowledge of the producer. A mere transcript of nature, either in paint or photography, does not give pleasure, though it may provoke our admiration for its wonderful technical qualities.

Grammar of Art.

To produce an understandable language, we must have grammar, and the grammar of art is composition. Its principles may be gleaned by studying the work of great artists. These principles are not lightly to be cast aside or despised, even though a certain section of modern painters choose for their own purpose to ignore them.

Composition is therefore of primary importance and the rules may be briefly summarised.

Principles.(a) The idea or sentiment of the picture. A happy subject should be bright and cheerful, and a sad one should be grey or gloomy.

(b) Each picture must have a dominant figure or object to which all others are to be subservient.

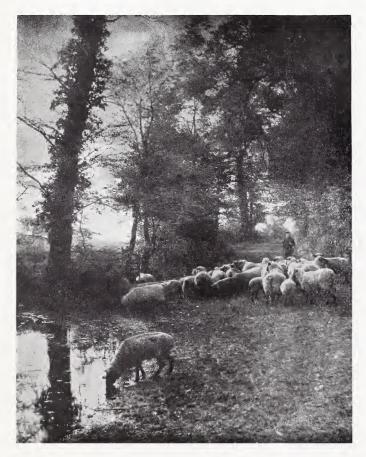


Fig. 3 (p. 3). SUNSET.

B. Alfieri.



B. A

Fig. 4 (p. 4).

B. Alfieri.

(c) There should be a secondary figure, object, or objects, connected with the first (except sometimes in the case of single portraits). For instance, a man with a dog, or watching sea gulls, or he may be doing something. In the last case, the thing done becomes the subdominant. This constitutes the motif of the picture, and all other objects are to be kept entirely subordinate to these two. In the case of a group of figures being the dominant object, one of them must be the dominant figure of the group; similarly in the case of a group of trees, one of them must be more important than the others.

(d) The background or scene must be entirely

subservient to all the other parts.

(e) The light and shade also shall be dominant, subdominant and subservient, i.e., there shall not be two darks or lights of equal importance in the picture. Neither shall the lights and shadows fight for precedence over one another; but one shall be of more importance than the other. All this is a matter of degree, even if all the picture is light or dark, one light or dark must predominate over all its fellows.

The above rules are imperative and cannot be broken without the picture failing to appeal to the artistic sense. True, there have been so-called exceptions, such as Millet's "The Angelus," where the two figures are apparently equally important. But in this instance it is the sentiment—the sound of the Angelus Bell—which is the true dominant note of the composition.

The above rules may be considered as being the skeleton or ground work on which we are to construct our picture. The next thing to consider is

the arrangement of our objects.

Positions in the Picture.

In the plane or surface of what is to be our picture, there are places of more importance than others, places where the eye rests instinctively—this is always more or less towards the centre, i.e., either to the right or left of the centre. The exact centre has always been discountenanced as dividing the picture into equal parts, and except in decorative subjects is hardly ever used to contain

the principal figure or object, or in cases where the picture is circular in shape, and here the centre may be the only place possible.



Fig. 39.

Three Chief Designs.

In the old conventional arrangement of composition the several styles were known as the "Angular,"

"Pyramidal" and "Circular," with sub-divisions into combinations one with another. And as they are still the groundwork of the construction of pictures, I cannot refrain from slightly touching upon the principles upon which they stand. The Angular design consists of a space in which an imaginary line runs from the top corner to the opposite lower corner, and in the lower space is contained the predominant object. From the opposite top corner to centre of picture ran another imaginary line, which divided the other section of the picture into the subdominant portion in which were the background, sky or other objects; the top portion was kept quiet in simple tones. accompanying rough sketch, fig. 39, shows the nearer group of trees as the dominant, and the distant group of trees as the subdominant parts of the composition.

THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION.

The Pyramidal design consists of an imaginary triangle in the picture, which contained the dominant object, and the other two sides the subdominant. Fig. 40.

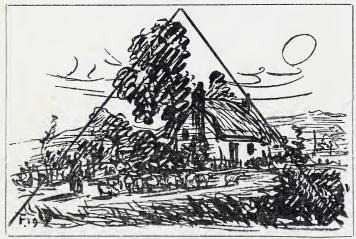


Fig. 40.

The Circular style was so-called because the lines of the picture ran in a circle or curve. Many of Turner's greatest masterpieces are designed in this style. Fig. 41.



Fig. 41.

Bust Portratts. In the "bust" portrait, which includes simply the head and shoulders, one can only look to the pose of the head and try to get a pleasing effect of light and shade. Amateur photographs are mainly deficient in the background being one and the same tint all over.



Fig. 42.

Half-length Figure.

The half-length gives more scope for arrangement, and one has more chance of showing the hands. Unfortunately, in photography, the lens has a habit of distorting these, and making them seem too large. In this shape, it is best not to have the head too much in the middle of the picture. Very slightly out of the exact centre is often sufficient. It is of importance that too much prominence be not given to the hands, unless they are a help in telling the story. In "genre" work, they can be

医阻抗 医医肠管 医医氏管 医皮肤 医



Fig. 5 (p. 4).

B. Alfieri.



THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION.

made to tell a great deal, for instance, in a picture of a miser clutching his gold. Fig. 42.

The "Three-quarter" size is to my mind one of the prettiest sizes for the amateur photographer, more especially for single figures or groups of two or three. Millais "Hearts are Trumps," is a fine specimen of three in this size. It is also very suitable for what are termed "at home" portraits. Here again the head or heads should not be too much in the centre of the picture, neither should they be at precisely equal distances from one another, or exactly opposite each other.

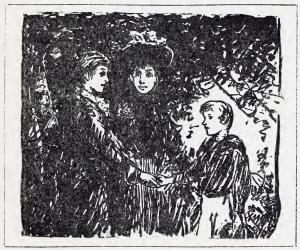


Fig. 43.

Full-length best when they are arranged with plenty of backgrounds are very effective for ladies, children, and groups, but care must be taken that the background is not too overpowering.

It is impossible in the short space of a magazine article to deal as extensively with this subject as I should like, but much must be left to the individual taste and choice of the photographer. In dealing with groups of more than three persons, it is best

to treat them as I shall describe in figure with

landscape later on in this chapter.

"Genre" pictures are an interesting branch of amateur photography, requiring as they do much active imagination and selection. Here original forms of arrangement as well as startling effects of light and shade, may well be employed so long as they are kept within the rules laid down in the first portion of this chapter. In "genre" it is essential that the model acts his or her part, i.e., it is desirable that the essentials of a portrait should be omitted. I do not say that he must be unlike what he is, but that he must be intent upon what he is doing, whereas in a portrait he must try and look like himself. The arrangement of the background in "genre" must be suitable for his assumed character and incongruities, such as a modern door for a cavalier must be avoided. Under the head of "genre" is included such subjects as the village cobbler, etc., but the mistake most common is that he is treated too much as a portrait, and is as a rule over-crowded with unnecessary detail and accessories. The old Dutch masters were very fond of this style of picture. "Genre" subjects are always best when not in too sharp focus; for they should suggest more than they tell, whereas portraits should have reasonably sharp definition. "Genre" should not have the figures too small, otherwise the background will overpower them.

What is perhaps the most interest-Figure with ing part of amateur photography Landscape. is figure with landscape, but the subject requires to be treated in the same way as "genre"; it is far more interesting if one can make the sitters seem unconscious of the camera. I do not refer to snapshots, where we have to take what we find, but to well-thought-out pictures. What can be done in that direction is well exemplified by what my friend, Colonel Gale,* has accomplished. His are no mere chance shots; he is for days thinking what will make a picture, and he, too, is an example of what knowledge will do to make his work pictorial. In figure and landscape the figures

THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION.

must be dominant. That is to say, the figures should be of such size that they are readily seen placed in the strong place of the picture, with the figure in focus if the picture is intended to be sharp, and the distance more or less out of focus. The mistake most amateurs make is placing the figures too near the spectator, so making them seem too large for the landscape. In groups of figures one or more should have their backs more or less towards the camera. This gives a natural look. In two or more groups in the same picture, such as scenes in a market place, there should be a dominant group placed in the strong part of the picture (see Fig. 44), with the other group or groups apart from them, yet connected by means of buildings, trees, etc.

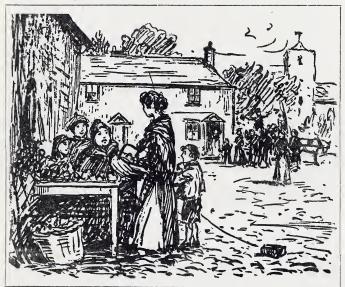


Fig. 44.

Landscape with Figures.

In "landscape and figures" the figures should be very small and quite subservient to the landscape.

Where the photographer makes the most common mistake is in placing his figures in the strong position, which should be reserved for the more

important object of the landscape. It is often only desirable to have a figure in the picture to give size to the landscape, or to show the height of a doorway in architecture, etc. In the arrangement of the picture it is advisable that the interest shall not be all on one side, more especially in pictures of large size. In photography this is a very common fault, as is also that of keeping all the interest in the centre. There should be no part of the picture that is useless to the subject, however vast may be the background. A few words upon the question of light and shade may conclude this all too short article, for the subject has so many aspects that it is only possible to touch upon its fringe.



Fig. 45.

Light and Shade.

The arrangement of light and shade is probably even more difficult than the arrangement of the cult than the arrangement of the subject; it is the infinite difference of treatment that gives light and shade its great charm. As far as I know, there is no hard and fast rule that I can lay down, except that the light or shade should predominate in a sufficiently clear manner, and, if possible, it is advisable that the deepest shadow should meet the highest light. This is exemplified

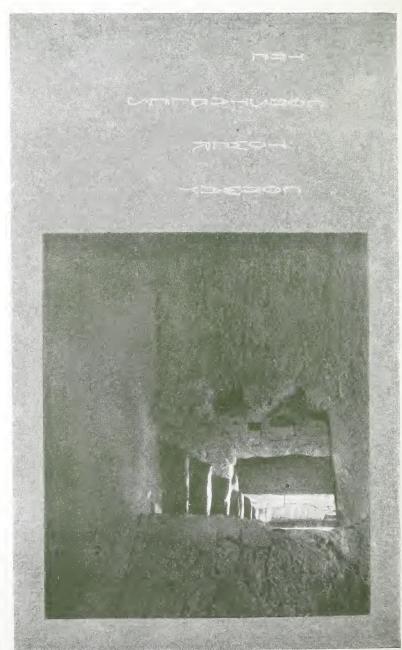




B Alfieri.

Fig. 6 (p. 4).

Against the Sky.



in many portraits by Rembrandt, Vandyke, and others, where the white collar meets the black dress, etc. Often in the landscapes of all great painters, there is an example of this method. It tends to accentuate what the artist wishes to be considered an important part of his picture, though not necessarily the most important part.

An effective light and shade arrangement helps an otherwise unattractive subject and a good subject is vastly improved by a fine effect of light

and shade.

The Strongest Light.

In portraits the strongest light should invariably be on the head or face—for this is, or should be, the

principal object.

Accessories.

Any objects used as accessories should seldom have any considerable interest, and should be kept more or less in half-tone if possible, except in the cases where the object is the sub-dominant. Then it should be the most important object after the dominant.

Hands.

Similarly, hands are best kept slightly darker than the face if they come near the bottom of the picture. If they are near the head they become part of the head as it were, and share the same range of light and shade.

Dark shadows and strong lights Repetition. without intermediate half-tones are to be avoided, as are also one strong dark and one strong light of similar size. Again, it is a rule in black and white that there shall be repetition, i.e. the lights and shades (either predominating) shall run throughout the picture connected by means of half-tones. These half-tones are rarely used in the dominant object alone. The strongest dark or the highest light are here preferable. Exceptions sometime occur in genre and landscape as in the case of a face against the light; or in landscape when light objects stand out against a bright sky background.

Relief of Masses.

A large mass of dark or light, such as a black or white dress, must be partly lost in the shadow of the background in places, or relieved in some other way. This may be done by strong effect of contrast,

either by deep half-tones or by broken light; but in whatever way it is done the figure must not look as though it were cut out and stuck on to the background.

The use of Light and Shade.

The effect of light and shade must not over-power the idea or detail, except in such parts as require suppressing. For the object of light and shade is to concentrate the interest upon the dominant object by means of variety of tone. Light, being more visible to the eye, naturally attracts more attention than shadow, and is therefore used in portraiture to fix the eye upon the principal object, and anything that prevents this had better be left out or kept in quiet shadow.

Shadows running straight across the picture are seldom satisfactory, as are also the repetitions of

straight lines in the design.

The Margins of the Picture. It is desirable that the design shall be kept within the picture, that is to say, that any object (more especially in landscape), which tends to draw the eye to the margins of the picture, shall either be entirely omitted or greatly subdued by shading. For the eye must be kept on the picture as a whole, and not dragged away to the edge to look at this or that unimportant object.

Truncation. This reminds me to mention that in the arranging of a portrait it is necessary there should be sufficient space above the head to prevent the appearance of the frame resting on the head. The same precaution also applies to a group of full-length trees in a

landscape.

In conclusion, I can only say that the photographer who knows even a few simple rules that govern the production of pictures, will have a greater chance of producing a photograph which is artistic, than one who only does what he himself considers right. For he must remember that unless his work shows a deeper knowledge than a mere transcript, he will fail to impress upon others the beauties he sees himself.

Some Notes on Composition in Landscape.

By HORACE MUMMERY.

HEN passing through almost any country, whether hilly or flat, on highway or field path, or off all beaten tracks, we are impressed even at a casual glance by the unending panorama of nature, and her inexhaustible variety. There appears such a full-

ness of picturesque material that it seems to the aspirant with the shiny new camera, or the unblotted sketch book, the easiest thing in the world to find a picture. Experience teaches us otherwise. Putting aside all technical defects, why is it that our earliest and sometimes even our latest efforts

are so unsatisfactory?

Selection. It is the selection that is at fault. To discover a beautiful place and to look round on its beauties with appreciative eye is all very well; but to cut out just a little bit of the scene, something that shall not look scrappy and forlorn, is a much more difficult matter. It is well to think of cutting out our picture from a larger scene, for one of the chief difficulties in selection is the problem of deciding whether the piece chosen will bear separating from its surroundings; many scenes, beautiful as they seem, will not bear this test.

A valuable help in our search is a A View Meter. view meter,† a simple contrivance that was described in the Landscape number of this magazine. It is a development of the little rectangular peephole that most painters find of service. Those who have not known the "comfort" (as the author puts it) of this contrivance, may be disappointed on turning up the number, to find what a simple little thing it is, but if this chapter should prompt the reader to use one, it will not have I have known first-class been written in vain. photographers, and painters too, who do not scorn this simple aid. They find it a saver of paint or $\dagger Vide$ page 52 of The Practical Photographer, No. 11—" Landscape Photography."

plates, though not always of shoe-leather; but that one must never begrudge when in search of the picturesque. Walk well round about any scene that pleases you and survey it carefully, cut it out with your view meter, and when you have made your choice and set up your camera, you will be better satisfied with the result than with a dozen

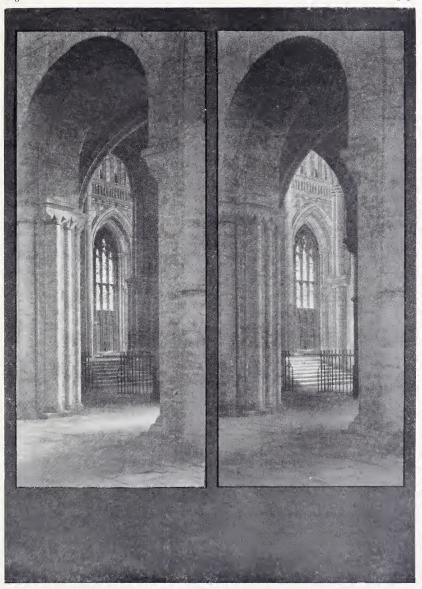
carelessly exposed plates.

Anyone who has walked in the footsteps of some painter with whose work he is familiar, especially if one of our most pictorial painters, will have noticed, on studying the country, the liberties that the artist has taken with nature, sometimes to the extent of an entire rearrangement of a locality, Now a painting may often appear to us different in colour and tone from nature, and yet be an attempt at faithful representation, for colour is inimitable with the materials at hand, our brightest pigments being only mud compared with the brilliancy of sunlight; so everyone is solving a problem in the way that he thinks best. But alterations of form fall under another heading, they are deliberate.

Many people are not aware of such Alterations. alterations, for they often increase the general likeness to a locality by a process of condensation rather than detraction. Nevertheless it shows what an important thing in a picture is its arrangement within its four boundaries. Whatever may be said about photography and painting, here at any rate the draughtsman has an advantage, and it behaves the photographer to be most careful The study of composition is unin his selection. doubtedly of use in the choice of a subject from nature, as is also a careful reference to any paintings that please us, especially if we try to find out why they do so. It is safe to say that most people will choose good compositions. Of course one can become too scientific and easily, far too easily, look at other people's work too much. On the other hand one cannot discover everything for oneself in the short span of a human life.

Principal
Object.

We choose our view from nature, if there is any conscious choice at all, for the sake of some particular object or group of objects, that pleases us. We



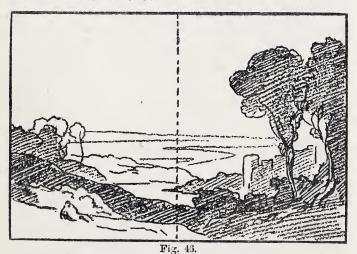
From Transept to Mave, Winchester.

S. G. Kimber.



SOME NOTES ON COMPOSITION IN LANDSCAPE.

should regard the rest of the scene as being more or less of a foil to show off this object of special Now this selection and the relation of the subsidiary forms constitute the whole gist of composition. "Where is this principal object to be placed?" is perhaps the first question to be asked. It will simplify matters by mentioning one place at any rate where it should not be, namely, the centre of the picture. A central group of any importance is too difficult to manage. Turner's Norham Castle is an example of how it has been done successfully, for the dark tower is nearly midway between the sides of the picture, but ordinary mortals had better leave such dangerous tasks alone. The best places in the picture lie between an upright line drawn through the centre, and the sides. simplest and most pleasing arrangement is to keep the larger mass on one side, and to strike a balance with distance and smaller forms of sufficient interest on the other.



An excellent example of such a form of composition is seen in Fig. 46, which is a rough sketch of Turner's "Severn and Wye," in the "Liber Studiorum," it could not serve our purpose better if it had been drawn to illustrate an article on

best, and is rather artificial, savouring too much of the old Classic Landscape; but it is composition—its only fault being that it is so faultless. Note the large mass on the one side, and the shadow running upwards to the other with the smaller trees and the light bank beneath, also the figurethese strike the balance perfectly. Note also the relation of the forms on either side to the centre line which I have dotted across. There should be no equal divisions of space, either horizontally or vertically. If there are they will look too formal and mechanical. Turner spaced all his pictures perfectly; nothing ever seems to be in the wrong place. But he twisted everything about to suit his own purpose and he composed invariably. The roughest sketch, consisting of a few lines jotted down in evident hurry on the back of some odd piece of paper, bears the same impress of thoughtful arrangement as do his finished pictures. One cannot, indeed, make nature so come together. Nevertheless Turner is a master to be studied. As we get interested in his works we learn to love balance and strong forms, and this cannot fail to help us in our choice from Nature. The seventy plates in the "Liber Studiorum" are now reproduced in one book within the reach of all, and they form quite a treatise on composition.

Design. I have been frequently struck by the difference that the lay mind discovers between the designer and the painter. Many people think that it is easier to paint a land-scape than to make a good pattern on a piece of carpet. But should not every picture, painted or photographed, stand the same test as a design? In fact it is a design. That is to say, a pleasing arrangement of forms, quite irrespective of their meaning.

Breadth. Look at your picture from a distance, far enough off to reduce it to mere dark and light patches. Be sure that if the picture is not satisfactory in the grouping and arrangement of these forms that the composition is bad, and that you will tire of it if it is hung up long enough. This is an excellent test as to whether a picture is too crowded or too empty, whether it is restless and flickering, "too busy" as painters

SOME NOTES ON COMPOSITION IN LANDSCAPE.

say, instead of being broad. Breadth is of the utmost importance in composition, but it is the thing that one can say least about. Dogmatising is of little value. Watch Nature, for she is broad in her best moods, seize her then and rest content.

Breadth, not Emptiness.

A great many people, both in painting and photography, do not differentiate between breadth and emptiness—between simplicity and baldness.

The Foreground. In practice when choosing a subject look first for a good foreground. In mountainous country where the ground is very broken the difficulty is often in deciding what to choose, but in other parts, especially where there are trim fields and many hedge-rows, a good foreground requires some search, for it is so difficult to get rid of the long horizontal lines of the hedges. Roads, paths, rivers, brooks, etc., give lines running into the picture which are always valuable.



Fig. 47.

Fig. 47 shows a roadside cottage, a very familiar style of subject, and always interesting. It also affords some scope for composition, for by moving farther or nearer or sideways on the road, some difference can be made in the relative positions of the various forms and the lines leading up to

them. If I were addressing a beginner I would recommend such a subject for practice. It is necessary to watch the lower edge of the picture, so that the road may not come too much in the middle nor run out at the corner. The end of the road needs attention too, if bending inwards it is usually good, if outwards it will serve if there is anything strong enough to oppose it, as the trees and figures do in the diagram. Constable's picture of Flatford Mill is an interesting case of how an artist tries to deal with a difficult line; the river running out at the left-hand corner has given some trouble, and he has tried to turn it inwards by a barge slewed across and by a portion of the bridge—none too successfully I think. Crossing lines unless they eventually converge are to be avoided, lines going different ways are always impracticable.

A brook is nearly always a beautiful object, both in itself and as a line on which to build a picture, if there are high banks our choice of position is further extended, by being able to stand on the water level or on the bank above—remember that a little difference in the position of your camera may make or mar your composition. I have sometimes painted a whole morning unsuccessfully, only to find that a little way further on the subject would have come together; in such cases careful watching through the view meter and a spirit of exploration save much disappointment. I often put a stone or stick to mark a point of view that

comes well before I resume the search.

Heaths with broken paths and patches of furze are favourite subjects with both painters and photographers, because with a little scheming one can get good lines; if any bit of middle distance has caught your fancy one can play about with the foreground till it comes right. Do not be content with merely changing the position, try a change of level, for often a troublesome line can be cut away by lowering the view point.

The Sky. The sky is the landscapist's best friend and his solace amid all his troubles. We live in a country possessing something, which passes for a climate, that produces good

Fig. 11 (p. 55).



Fig. 12 (p. 59).

C. J. Hankinson.

A native grace Sat fair proportioned on her polished limbs Veiled in a simple robe.

SOME NOTES ON COMPOSITION IN LANDSCAPE.

skies. English painters have always painted them well. Setting aside their beautiful colour, the variety and gracefulness of the cloud form. make them of the greatest use in composition.

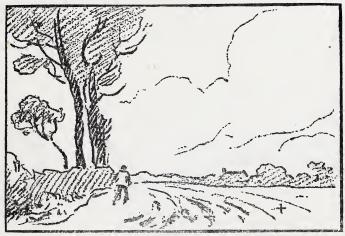


Fig 48.

Photographers do not make as much use of the sky as they might. Some of the murky, smudgy skies in vogue to-day are not much of an improvement on the glaring white space of the old seaside view. Fig. 48 is an example of the value of clouds in composition, and is a literal rendering of a particular place. The receding hedge and some freshly-made furrows give good lines, but it requires The big cumulus clouds and the a strong sky. distant trees and house balance the weighty mass of the large trees. Where the sky space is small and broken by forms against it, it should be quiet and even. In flat country, or over the sea, the sky attains its full importance: in many cases it is the picture. Where there are many clouds study their grouping, they often come in ranks or layers forming sweeping lines of great beauty and service. Fig. 49 shows a bend of road and hedge-side that I had passed by many times as uninteresting, but seeing it one day when the clouds were blowing across in long slanting lines I was struck with the radiation of sky, road, and furrows. I do not put

this forward as an example of good composition, but it shows how something can be made out of very unpromising material.



Fig. 49.

The Horizon. The question arises as to the proportion of sky to the rest of the picture, in open country. Until recently, painters kept as large an expanse of sky as possible, now it is fashionable to have a high horizon with a mere line of sky. Whatever may be said in defence of this practice, it is certain that everyone likes air in a picture. In Nature we walk about under a great dome stretching high above our heads, and we should not cramp the sky in our pictures of it. A little study of Cox, Collier, or in fact of any of the English water colourists, will give us some ideas on this point.

Woodland scenery at all seasons yields good materials for picture making. It is easy to find good forms, but the difficulty is in leaving off. Often trees are shown cut off both top and bottom and are mere logs stretching across the picture. Beware of introducing bits of foreground objects—there should always be enough of them to suggest completeness. Turner was very fond of pieces of temples, fruit stalls, etc., at the sides of his pictures, and the success of his compositions justified this

SOME NOTES ON COMPOSITION IN LANDSCAPE.

practice in his case, but it is a dangerous trick, as we may see in his imitators. A foreground can easily be brought too near, unmanageably near at any rate.

Truncations. Modern impressionistic painters and photographers delight in peculiar truncation, but I fail to see how a spray of blurred leaves, or half a top hat, or a segment of somebody's head, really enrich a picture. The argument that it is as we see is false, for we are constantly shifting our gaze and are not really conscious of a fixed field of view. We do not see in sections and that is why we have to be so careful about the margins of our pictures. The eye must never be attracted to the margins.

As to the shape of a picture, ex-Proportions. perience seems to have settled the best proportions of a plate or canvas, and the stock sizes are not far amiss. Round or oval forms do not lend themselves to landscape, and the square picture, also, is undesirable. The narrow, horizontal form sometimes justifies itself, but this is exceptional. There is too little sky and the part of it that is usually most interesting falls outside the range of the picture. The tall upright—the most unnatural form of all-is sometimes defended as being "decorative," a word of doubtful meaning and resembling charity in the matter of covering sins. Much of the art nowadays labelled "decorative" would have been better destroyed by its producers amid tears and good resolutions, but, alas, it is cast forth before the public eye and before long provokes somebody else to go one better-or rather worse.

Figures. Figures are so useful and tempting in landscape composition that they are often used unadvisably. Many photographers do not seem sufficiently clear in their minds as to whether their subject is to be a landscape or figure piece. One or the other should certainly predominate. The interests must never clash. If they do the result is an indefinite production that is neither figure nor landscape. It is impossible to fix any proportions for figures, but it is better to

keep them small. The picturesque figure is dving out from the countryside. The ploughman and the shepherd are usually fitted out from the slop-shop in the nearest town and do not show enough character in their costumes to be desirable as foreground objects. Our friend, also, who will obligingly stand for us, though irreproachably attired, is better well within the picture—for it is distance that "lends enchantment." whatever the costume of our models there still remains the difficulty of posing. A man may be moving ever so gracefully, but ask him to hold the scythe quietly for a minute—the result is usually disappointing. Instantaneous work is another matter, but I am speaking now of the case when a figure is required to be in a certain place as an accessory in a landscape. If the figures are small our difficulties are certainly reduced. With regard to the position of figures they are usually best placed near the mass of the picture, unless they are well in the distance. In diagram 46 the figure is certainly on the other side, but it is not a strongly-marked figure and serves to repeat the shape of the bank above, a sort of echo as it were—a device of which Turner never tired. More often we may find his figures near the largest forms. In diagram 47 the small figures come well in the distance, but if a nearer figure were used it should be close beside the hedge adjoining the cottage. In diagram 48, and subjects of a like nature, there is a natural tendency to put a figure where I have marked a cross. This is done with the intention of balancing the picture, but the figure is better where it is. Usually, the mere feeling that one part of the picture is more open, and that there the eye can look out, goes a long way towards balancing the whole composition. In the fourth sketch I think the figure is naturally best where the lines focus. It accents this convergence, which is the raison d'être of the picture.

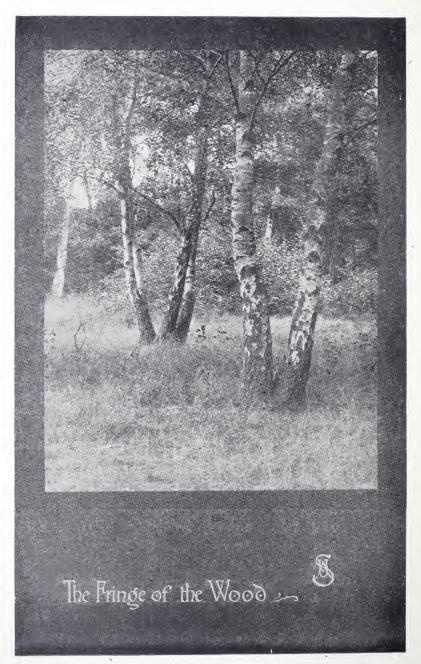
Study and Freedom.

In conclusion, let me add a little story told me by a golfing friend, who sought to improve his style by taking lessons from a professional, but after a while his play seemed to get worse instead of



"MAY"

BY MILDA STEVENSON



better, so he questioned his teacher who said, "You now know the rules and the way to make the stroke, but you must also learn to let yourself go." The experience of others, however humble, as well as the examples of great masters are of interest and use. Let us think them well over and then "let ourselves go."—Ars est celare artem.

Notes on Composition.

By EUSTACE CALLAND.

T is probable that all esthetic pleasure has a direct physiological basis, and is immediately connected with the stimulation and fatigue of the senses. The subject has been very thoroughly dealt with, though no doubt the conclusions that have been arrived at are, in some cases, rather fanciful. But we may

take it as very probable that the appreciation or dislike involved in artistic composition, whether it be in architecture, sculpture or design in the flat, is the direct outcome of excitation or irritation of the nerves of sight; a simple illustration is afforded by the irritation produced by walking past a line of railings through which sunlight is streaming, being akin to "spottiness" in pictorial composition.

The agreeable qualities of stability, balance, breadth, concentration, repetition, rhythm, must be present in combination in every work of art.

Rules of Art.

Rules of art are an impossibility, but general principles may be stated. The Hon. John Collier, referring to pictorial art, says:—"A picture must not be a mere diagram, it must have pictorial qualities, that is, the arrangement of line and colour must be agreeable, or at least effective. . . . The sense of symmetry can perhaps be educated by studying the works of great masters, but certainly no definite rules can be derived from them, and any rules that have been so derived by the perverted ingenuity of writers on æsthetics are far more likely to be a hindrance than a help."

Stability is a fundamental principle Principles. throughout nature, giving satisfaction to the eye, in the shapes of hills and the trunks of trees and in pyramidal forms in groups, suggesting equilibrium, and balance follows. Lines must not run all one way, nor can one side of the picture-space be a mass of light or shadow without some counter attraction for the eye to oppose it.

Objects in the same plane and the Tone and same distance from the source of Breadth. illumination, are said to be in the same tone, whether differing in colour or black and We may select such a combination of objects illumined in such a manner as to give broad stretches of light and shade. This is at least agreeable and is one of the most important qualities in Chiaroscuro is a term conveniently used to mean the arrangement of tones to please the eye, and their relative positions in the picture space.

The light and shade may have a Concentration. nucleus, a concentration in one part, the highest light and deepest shadow in conjunction, and this again is a further important factor in many pictures.

Repetition in forms, if not in excess, Repetition. is another pleasant quality, as is also rhythm, in which nature appears to rejoice. In pictures, many compositions owe their beauty to

a wave-like repetition of outline.

This is all well-known and elementary, but the student must be conscious of it, and it is better that this feeling should be instinctive rather than the result of much learning and example. The applications of principles must always be unperceived, for nothing good will be done by thinking of rules or guiding principles when seeking for a subject. The subject must fascinate and compel attention through the sense of beauty, whether newly awakened or otherwise; dissection and analysis may take place afterwards if you will.

The more Flagrant Errors of the Beginner.

It may well be an axiom that a picture should attract by its design and pattern of light and shade before we are near enough to it to divine Chiaroscuro more the subject.

often than not is never thought of. Subject and sentiment alone actuate the selection of the picture. Sentiment of the nobler sort is imperative in the endeavour to express personal impressions, not the kind that leads to the "commonplace second-hand stock-in-trade species of pictorial composition," to quote Mr. Walter Crane. This writer observes with truth that "the rush for directness and the unbiassed imitation of nature" has discouraged the commonplace composition, but with it the expressive resource of line included in the term composition. "Few," he says, "think of the schemes of line and counterbalancing curves of their picture in skeleton." The photographer has rather to think of his picture in masses, but the boundaries of the leading masses or tones are often not interwoven harmoniously, and do not assist the idea the picture has to convey.

The Chief Interest of the Picture. The chief interest is frequently somewhere outside the magic area where it should have been, either too central or too marginal; or the

composition is scattered with many objects of equal interest, as in a room crowded with beautiful details but unpleasing as a whole.

Mechanical, as distinct from Formal.

The outlines or boundaries are sometimes aggressive and have a mechanical aspect, too many straight lines and evident angulariting from formality, referred to

ity. This is distinct from formality, referred to later.

Wide Angle of Vision.

Two wide an angle of view is common. It increases the difficulty of treating the subject pictorially, and distracts by the disagreeable perspective that follows.

The Personal Element. Most of all there is lacking evidence of personal artistic feeling. I do not think too much can be made of the personal element in photography. If the student has any sense of what is beautiful he will have in course of time, perhaps, preferences for certain harmonies, arrangement of forms, preferences even for a certain class of subjects, which will show themselves even in so impersonal a craft as photo-

graphy. He will see certain qualities to which he was formerly blind, and will find delight in expressing them however inadequately, and he will endeavour to render most forcibly those notes that strike a sympathetic chord in his nature.

Style and Character.

This personal feeling properly developed should ultimately give to every work created a certain style and character that is more possible now than in the early days of photography, when the printing

processes were less elastic.

Some aspects of photographic com-Decorative positions may be briefly noticed. Composition. Just as some easel pictures tend halfway towards mural decoration, that is to say are designed to fit in a scheme of architectural lines and masses rather than be abruptly cut off from them by the frame, so may some subjects be so fitly rendered in photography. The lines of the composition may be more formal, the modelling shallower, the forms employed leaning towards the artificial: the whole picture being an agreeable pattern of light and shade; subject, aerial perspective and gradation being rather subordinate. word decorative is constantly applied to composition; it connotes such an arrangement as will harmonise in some degree with the formal surroundings in which it is to be ultimately placed; in photography, the selection of forms that are simple, quaint, with an artificial tendency and treatment tending to one place rather than many. The painters of the Tuscan school whose works were generally altar pieces or designed for a particular space, all show this intention, and one cannot believe that they would have painted otherwise for the purpose intended. The work of Botticelli, and Pietro di Cosimos' "Death of Procris" in the National Gallery, although far removed from truth to nature, are full of suggestion, so indeed are some of the works of the modern "primitives."

Japanese
Influence.
The advent of Japanese art has had a very marked effect on modern composition, introducing a wholly fresh and often delightful method of dealing with

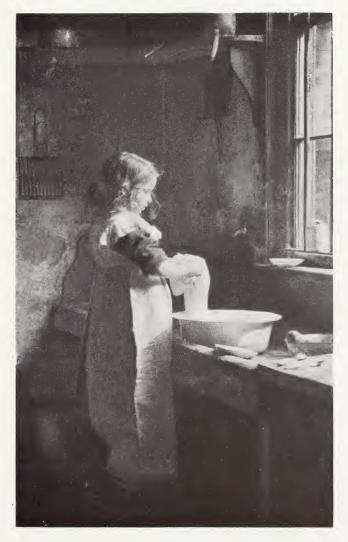


Fig. 15 (p. 58).

Rev. H. W. Dick.

A Wee Mother.



H RIVERSIDE LANDSGAPE.

the spacing of objects. The entirely unconventional treatment of their subjects by the modern impressionists is well suited to the art of photography, but it should be carefully noted that with all the apparent abandonment of classic principles there is generally a strong "decorative" feeling in which the photographer as a rule is greatly lacking.

It is impossible to dissociate colour Colour as in our consideration of composition, affecting especially if we have a keen sense Composition. of fine colour, and colour modifies every tone, slightly, it is true, but quite sufficiently to be of importance. We have colours in every subject that are of closely equal monochrome value, we must decide how near we wish them to be and our process now gives us great latitude. essential to have a clear conception of the monochrome values of colour not only because our process may or may not give themall wrong according to the means we employ, but also because we have to represent nature in one tint, and so must accustom ourselves to translate all the tints of nature into terms of that one tint we decide to use, and this translation should be in our mind as we look at the ground glass. The beginner may fail to assign any monochrome value to a blue sky, or the roses in a child's face may not appear to him as darker patches on the surface of the tones that go to make up the modelling. How this affects the chiaroscuro and character of the picture is readily seen.

The same broad principles of course Composition rule in portraiture or figure subin Portraiture. jects, but in portraiture it is generally essential that all should subserve to character. It is admitted that the conditions for an ordered chiaroscuro are more favourable here than in landscape, and there is less excuse for faulty lighting and composition. The scheme of lighting may be said to be in our hands, influenced by such considerations as gaiety and lightness, youth and age, dignity, or any unpleasant features that we perceive in our sitter that must be masked or altered by shadows. One face or figure may suggest a light and delicate scheme in which concentration

of light and shadow may give place to something in the nature of a pleasing and harmonious pattern with the figure or face the dominant note. The face in old age may well be treated in masses of light and shade more vigorously opposed than appropriate in the rounded contours of youth. The character of the sitter is, of course, largely expressed in the hands, and as patches of light alone they are rather important elements in the arrangement, since their shape, direction and tone have to be considered. The tone will usually need to be lower than that of the face.

In portraiture or figure studies it Conventional is possible to be too much of a slave Portraiture. to conventional composition, and a study of good Japanese prints might be recommended as a healthy correction, although it may sound absurd in connection with photography. They are really a revelation in simplification and arrangement. It is not of necessity bad composition to squeeze a figure within the frame with much room on either side, or, if it is a woman in a large "picture" hat, the latter may be cut into by the frame, sometimes part of the head may be cut off too; but this is heresy! On the other hand it is often agreeable to have much space above your figures. Have we not the example of Velasquez which we can never hope to surpass? Vermeer's "Lady with a Spinet" (National Gallery) is a composition photographers can never look at too much. The selection of groups of figures

Figures in the in street and landscape as a hap-Street and in hazard arrangement demands from Landscape. the photographer a quickness of judgment that the painter with all his difficulties has seldom to exercise, for he is not called upon to summarily and unalterably fix the whole of his picture. In the picture of a busy street or market place, even in the most intentionally scattered composition, there should be one or two foreground groups or figures detached from the rest. If not, there must be some other objects sufficiently strong to counteract monotony. The most scattered composition, possible in painting like Lucien Pissaro's "Boulevard des Italiens," has something which

pulls it together; in a black and white copy it is the omnibuses and naked stems and branches of the trees. Photographers have to contend with a multitude of conflicting lights in photographs, which do not strike the eye so forcibly in nature. The cabinet pictures of the Dutch artists at our National Gallery afford splendid object lessons in the arrangement of many figures. On a country road it is so rarely we get the right conditions haphazard that it is surely best to choose some spot that offers an agreeable setting and wait (on a day when there is a market in the neighbouring town for choice) until the farm cart, or sheep, or whatever has been deemed wanting, shall come along and complete the picture.

A crowd of figures is often very helpful in an architectural composition. In a cathedral, unhappily, it is beyond photography, though a study of De Witte and many others in the National Gallery, and Bosboom among the later Dutchmen, shows

how effective their presence may be.

There are obvious difficulties in the introduction of figures or parts of figures in the immediate foreground, except in gardens, or private enclosures. We see many charming pictures in the parks, and out-door restaurants, which need a figure or two quite close that would necessarily be a portrait.

Figures in a landscape, even if important in mere size, need not of necessity form or be in the centre of interest. A good example of this is seen in Rubens' Great Autumn landscape (National Gallery) where all the attention is directed to the Château de Stein, although there are a farm waggon and figures in a

corner of the foreground.

Landscape. Landscape is the subject of most photographers, and perhaps demands as much art as any other branch. It is more difficult to escape the commonplace. There is a character to express, as in portraiture; repose, grandeur, the activity of the elements, the nature of the country, and the composition should emphasize it. Flat marshy land may have the sinuous lines of a river and rounded forms of clouds to lead the eye into the picture, and contrast with the level horizon, which should be somewhat low.

Landscape of formal character will need to be treated in broad masses and with an eye to pattern. Masses of trees are too often disturbing, with flickering lights that only the lens sees: these must be corrected. Mountain scenery, above all, demands largeness of treatment if we are to escape the commonplace.

We are all aware of the want of Simplification pictorial interest in the usual view. of the Usual It is too full of detail which the View. eye never grasps when it is conscious of dignity and grandeur which are the artistic impressions received. The outline is sharp and clear so that blurring fails of its purpose, therefore choice of lighting and skill in printing must go to attain something like the result which the painter obtains by building up, or leaving out, as he completes his The photographer has a splendid object lesson in simplicity in the Alpine pictures of Segantini.

The Sea. Painters of the sea contrive to interest us more than photographers, despite their wonderful realism. Simplification comes to their aid, and the white patches of waves can be drawn to follow one another in graceful curves, and the leading waves occupy their right importance and strength. In a photograph of the sea, pattern may well receive more attention.

The proportions of the confining The Picture lines of a picture are not subject Space. to rules. If they are quite square or extremely long and narrow, they may enclose a more formal treatment of subject than otherwise. There is abundant justification for square shapes. The well-known "Ambassadors" of Holbein, is a satisfactory example. Trimming the print is the final touch to the composition. The painter is not always sure of his space when he begins, and has sometimes tacked on extra canvas on one or more sides. In rough sketches it is impossible to illustrate any subtleties of composition, and the accompanying crude forms are given just to show something of the most elementary principles.







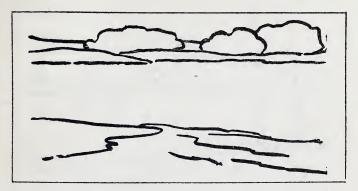


Fig. 50.

Fig. 50. Diagram suggesting a river showing the two banks running from one side to the other of the picture with consequent isolation of the two parts, and absence of any sense of design.



Fig. 51.

Fig. 51. The masts of the boats have the effect of joining up the two parts, but the qualities of repetition and balance are wanting.

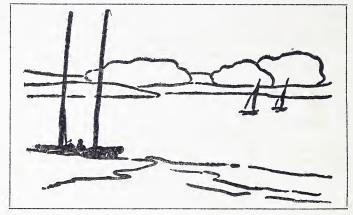


Fig. 52.

Fig. 52. The distant boats add repetition and idea of balance, but the two sets of boats are separated too much and the whole is monotonous.

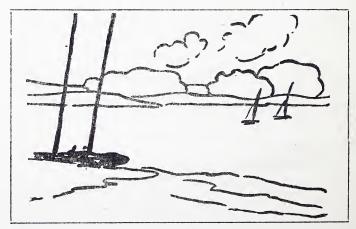


Fig. 53.

Fig. 53. Some suggestion of clouds which give a little variety to the whole and "echo" the two sets of forms represented by the boats, bringing the whole composition a little closer together.

Composition in Painting and Photography.

By G. A. STOREY, A.R.A.



HE whole art of composition consists in making each part of a work advantage the rest, and help the beauty of the whole.

It is the most subtle, most mysterious and most difficult element to master and explain, and yet the very existence of art depends upon it.

Principles, not Rules.

It is subject to no set rules, for its variations are infinite, and yet it has certain fixed principles which are so general that they apply equally to form,

colour, light and shade, tone, etc., as well as to the sister arts of sculpture, poetry, music, literature, the drama, and architecture.

Nature and Art. Like all the other laws and principles of art, those of composition are founded on the study of nature,

so that the photographer has an equal chance with the painter of mastering them, although he cannot take so much liberty with his materials as the latter. and must frequently be baulked by the inability to leave out or to change what is necessary to the complete beauty of the design.

But notwithstanding this there is Grouping. much in nature that the photographer and painter can study side by side, for "Nature," as Leslie notes, "everywhere arranges her productions in clusters, and to this end she employs a variety of means. The heavenly bodies are grouped by attraction, flowers and trees by the natural means by which they are propagated, while the social instincts congregate man, and most other animals, into societies, and the same instincts impel in man, as well as in many of the inferior creatures, the grouping of their habitations. Grouping therefore is a universal law of nature."

"In observing crowds we notice Repetition. many repetitions of similar attitudes, and in herds of cattle, flocks of sheep, etc., we remark this also. Repetitions of forms and shapes are likewise of frequent occurrence in trees, flowers, the outlines of mountains, clouds, etc. Here we may note two things which have much to do with composition. First: Grouping—a lesson may often be learnt in this art by noticing how men, women and children will group themselves to listen to the humours of a cheap-jack at a fair, or to look at Punch and Judy, or any other street show. The cheap-jack will form a principal figure, and the very attitudes of the various onlookers and laughing listeners will all lead the eye to the speaker and the object he offers for sale, say a purse with a guinea in it which he offers for the small sum of six pennies. Here would be a composition of figures ready-made, requiring perhaps but slight alteration, a few omissions and so forth, but apart from the subject, we should have a lesson in composition containing all the rules and regulations of the schools, with this advantage, that it would be natural and not The same principles would apply, for instance, to "St. Paul preaching at Athens." A very different subject, but the art would be identical."

Principality or twig with a few leaves springing from it, one larger than the others and some smaller, so that from the law of Principality, and its counter law of

Subordination.

Let us remember that we cannot have two Hamlets in the same play, but we can have an Ophelia, a Polonius, and other personages, who help to make the chief character more marked, and bring out his wit, his humour and his philosophy.

Unity. It follows then that unity or oneness is another principle, perhaps the first of all, that we must take into account. The principal figure, or group, or object, or idea, must be the keynote to all the rest. If it is desired to make this very prominent, then in certain

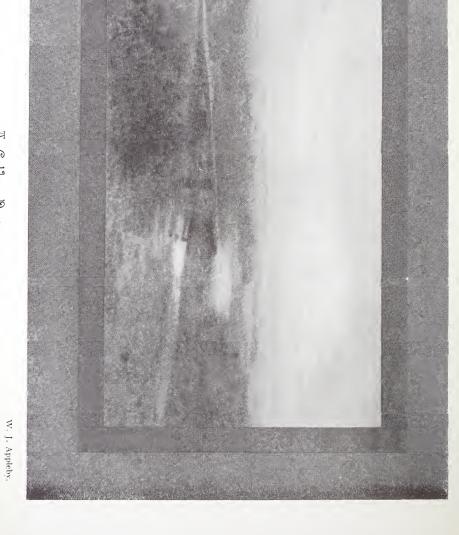


Fig. 18.

In the Morth Transept, York.

W. G. Hill





COMPOSITION IN PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY.

degrees the rest must be subordinated to it, thus bringing the whole thing together in harmony and perfect fellowship. If it is desired to spread the beauty of the principal object, then let it be echoed and repeated in various ways. Or, if on the other hand, to force and to isolate it, a Contrast.

strong contrast is necessary.

We come then to the law of contrast, the opposition of light and shade, the one giving value to the other—the shade making the light brilliant, the light making the shade mysterious and profound. This principle applies to lines as well as masses, to delicate tones and tints as well as to rich and deep colouring.

A rocket shot into the air describes Curvature. a certain curve more or less beautiful, but several rockets taking slightly divergent courses, make the whole display much more rich

and beautiful.

This leads to the contemplation of Radiation. the beauty of curvature and radiation. Nor can we have better lessons in this principle than the branching of trees and all the thousands of varieties of growth and of budding and blossoming of the vegetable world. Nay, throughout nature we shall find this law of radiation giving beauty and life to all her work.

We must also note the law of Repetition. repetition already alluded to, which delights us like the echo among the hills growing fainter and fainter. We might almost liken it to charity spreading her gifts; and it is like perspective, which by repeating similar forms, smaller and smaller by degrees and beautifully less, leads the eye away into the far-off distance, and gives us the sensation of vast space, which is always a delight to the mind, since it approaches the infinite

And here again we must consider The Infinite. this word infinite, for this too is one of the elements of composition. The parabolic curves, or shall we rather say the curvature of nature's outlines shown in the muscular form of man and other animals, in fish, birds, reptiles, branches, leaves, etc., are all marked by this infinity

of direction and grace. So also are the most beautiful of the works of men's hands. It is only when machinery steps in with its circles and its straight lines, its lathe-turned abominations, and its almost unbearable monotony, that the artist puts his hands before his eyes, as though he feared to look upon the death of art.

The above then are a few of the principles which influence the artist or composer in his work. It remains for us to deduce from them the guiding rules that we must adopt in our pictorial re-

presentation.

Individuality. Every individual artist forms his own code, his own set of rules. Nor does he work by recipe but rather from the taste or the love that is within him, thus giving a distinct character to the productions of every great master.

These few remarks must be taken merely as an introduction to a delightful subject that would require a volume to explain and illustrate; but it is also one that an intelligent and observant individual might to a great extent work out for himself.

Selection. Now, how is the photographer to proceed? He cannot twist and turn things about, but must take them as he finds them, so it is only by careful selection that he can secure the pictures he wants, and by studying the principles of composition and looking for them everywhere around him he may at length become a connoisseur in nature's art and then seize her pictures as she presents them. He will be a good composer if he can do this, giving just as much and no more of the scene before him as will make a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

Let him now and then forego the pleasure of taking a view, and let him see whether he can make studies, as an artist makes sketches, of certain things which will illustrate the principles or the

laws of composition.

Portraits and Figures.

In portraits and figure subjects the photographer has more control over his composition than in landscapes; he also has the advantage of being able to

COMPOSITION IN PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY.

carry his studio (that is his camera) about with him, and when he sees the real rustics, the real ploughman, the real gamekeeper, cowkeeper, or shepherd, or shepherdess, he can take them unawares, and secure the true character of these separate individuals, which is so valuable to those who seek for actual truth in Art. But, of course, even with these rustic figures he must study how to place them in his picture to the best advantage.

And as he wanders through the fields or by the river, keeping these laws of composition in his mind he will see how constantly nature makes use of them, and how often they recur—and how much knowledge of real art may thus be acquired, and after some practice and self-training he will pick up treasures by the wayside, and because they are well composed, they will rivet themselves in his memory, for there is strength in unity and harmony of forms and tones and lights and shades, just as there is in a well organised society.

Suppose we wish to note the laws Various Laws. of Principality and Unity - or rather, without thinking of composition at all, we wish to depict some evening effect, some old tower with the light behind it reflected in the river beneath it, as in Turner's "Norham Castle" in the "Liber Studiorum" we shall seek out and watch for the effect, study it over and over again, perhaps take many negatives before getting the right one, and then we may call it "the law of Unity" and "Principality" and of "Repetition" (for in a composition nearly all the laws come in) and this law of Repetition is a very beautiful law. We have already spoken of it as the echo among the woods and the hills-and if there should be a real old bridge across that river, or some eel-boats or posts, or a row of willows diminishing in perspective and so forth; then we shall mark the law of Continuity closely allied to the law of Repetition.

And so we may go on finding other laws—if we seek for them—which ought to add to the delight of contemplating nature as well as to the beautiful records in our portfolio, and if we can jot them

down with the pencil as well as with the camera then we ought to be still more satisfied.



Fig. 54.

Again the law of Radiation of which we have already spcken, can not only be studied in trees and plant forms coupled with the law of Curvature, as shown in the accompanying sketch, but it can be traced in the disposition of the hills and in any undulating landscape—but it must be looked for and not only there, but in the countless aspects of the sky and the ever-varying beauties of the clouds. We shall find too that the law of Contrast is



GHE COW SHOWER CHRISG CHURCH GAGE CADGER

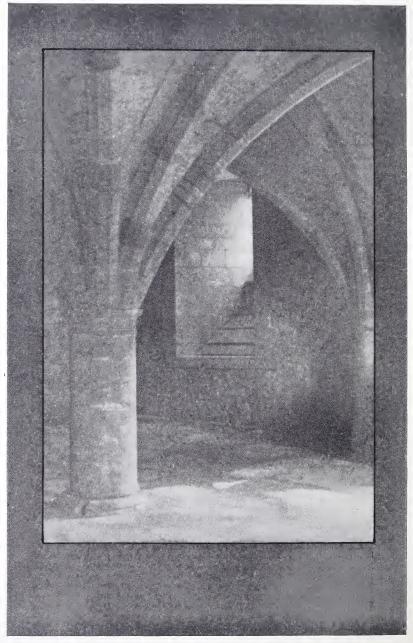


Fig. 21 (p. 53).

The Crypt, Durham.

J. J. Rutherford.

COMPOSITION IN PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY.

everywhere apparent, especially when we have strong light and shade—or rocks and delicate trees, and far-off hills and dales—which is too obvious to comment on here—although it will be found a most valuable element in portraiture if we wish to give full value to the head and the expression of the sitter.

Harmony. And then to crown it all, and to assemble all these laws together as it were in happy combination, we have the law of Harmony. Let your picture begin and end in the same key—with subordinate passages and perhaps a little waywardness here and there. That is, let it possess that oneness and completeness, which is obtained by only admitting those things that are wanted and leaving out all that is unnecessary and interfering, such as distracting lights, lines which lead to confusion, and indeed everything that does not tend to advantage the rest and help to the beauty of the whole.

Thoughts on Composition.

By F. C. MOORE.

N Mr. Kipling's vivid study of artist life two principles are incidentally laid down which might, with advantage, be studied by the student of Pictorial Photography. The first is a criticism by Dick Heldar on Maisie's work—"There is no special reason," says he, "why it should be done at all." The second

is a quotation from Kami, the French artist:

"Above all, ladies, with conviction."

The point of these remarks is easily realized when we look at the average exhibition of photographs. In most cases the majority are plainly futile from want of motive. Some seem to think that rough paper and under-developed negatives are all that is essential to the production of a picture. In other cases, fine technical workmanship and much evident labour are made of no avail, through the absence of what (for want of a better word) may be called "grip;" we perceive at once an uncertainty of purpose which mars all. No impression is left. We are ready at once for the next thing. A great artist sees something before he

touches the canvas, and if his powers of expression and technical handling are adequate, he conveys it to the world.

This attitude must not be mistaken for the desire to teach the public or to inculcate moral lessons. "Every picture tells a story' might as suitably be placed over some exhibitions, as in the patent medicine advertisements. But it is not art. The final truth is, that at the back of all excellence of technique, there must be an essence—an idea, impression, feeling, call it what you will—of which the mere paper or canvas is only the embodiment. The man who can rise to the expression of a great idea, whether by paint, by pen and ink, or by a dry plate,

is the man who will be remembered.

"Narrow in range and emphatic in expression," is Philip Gilbert Hamerton's phrase for photography; and elsewhere he says, "I, such a one, chose such a subject," is all that can be conveyed by a photograph. Possibly just, at the time they were written; nothing could be more unjust than these statements are now. The possibilities of composition are still half unexplored. When a man can choose a background of Welsh mountains, a middle distance of Kentish uplands, and a foreground of Yorkshire moors (I am purposely taking an extreme case) it is absurd to say that no more individuality is manifested than the mere individuality of selection. The difference in degree is so great as to amount to a difference in kind.

It has been asserted that the composite method alluded to is illegitimate and almost, indeed, immoral. But have the objectors ever really considered their position? When they themselves photograph a noble headland or a sparkling stream in preference to a muddy inlet or a sandy waste, they tacitly assert that nature is not always pictorial. And if we may select one scene out of a hundred, why may we not select one portion of a negative from the rest? We can select the best view point by moving our camera. Why may we not select the best of that best by moving the negative? But the position is like that of Sir George Eastlake and the land-scape without the brown tree.—It is forbidden,

therefore it must not be done.

The Arrangement of the Foreground.

By F. C. L.

ROBABLY most of my readers are aware of the importance of the choice of a suitable foreground. But for the moment we are not so much concerned with the question of suitability, or the reverse, as with the management of a suitable foreground when found. Indeed, it will be

desirable for the student to put out of his mind for the present any question of suitability, so that he may give undivided attention to the question, "In what way can I modify the composition or arrangement of the foreground?" This question prompts another one, viz., "What are the usual defects of foreground arrangement?" To this we may reply. The first is that of spreading out the foreground to occupy too much picture space. We may best see this by taking a very ordinary example (see Fig. 22). Here we have a case where far too much picture space is taken up by the unimportant roadway. One first impulse is to take the trimming knife and cut along the line AB. But second thoughts show that it will be a very unsatisfactory treatment. (1) It will cut off the sapling to our right and make it appear to be resting on the frame or margin of our picture. (2) It will bring the horizon too near the centre of the picture. (3) It will leave us with a stunted proportion of trees in the middle distance. But we can repeat the view from the same standpoint and raise the sliding front, i.e., lens. True, this evades failings 2 and 3, but leaves us with our mutilated sapling, vide Fig. 23. It is true that in this instance the sapling is of no moment, but it is here introduced to represent say—a standing figure or other feature of importance.

If, however, we lower our camera—i.e., view point—so that the lens is now not 5 feet but 3 feet from the ground, we overcome all the three objections at once, vide Fig. 24. A glance at Fig. 22 conveys the impression that the road "runs up hill," but Fig. 24 shows us that it is practically

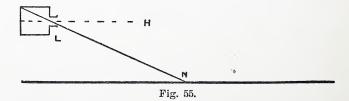
level. This up-hill effect is often noticeable with interiors and figures taken with the lens too high above ground. It is, of course, accentuated by being too near one's sitter or other foreground

object.

These three figures also convey other useful hints as to faulty composition. Note the edge of the path on our right runs in almost a vertical line, which is obviously undesirable—a common fault in street views with the hand camera, and due to standing too near the edge of the pavement. Next observe that the other edge of the path runs out of the picture at P,Q,R, three entirely different positions. Note that in Fig. 23 we cut away a certain part of the foreground, but that Figs. 22 and 24 contain the same amount of foreground; the former spreads it out, the latter compresses it. In a case where in our foreground we have a projecting object such as a bush, rock, etc., by lowering the camera we can make this bush or rock or other object hide some undesirable feature a little further away.

The intelligent worker will very properly want to understand the why and wherefore of the foregoing. We have prepared the following diagrams, which will show the matter at a glance. We have purposely exaggerated proportions for the sake of

clearness.



In Fig. 55 we show the camera in a high position, say 5 feet from the foreground; N is the near point of the foreground and the dotted line is the direction of the horizon, so that the angle HLN is what we may term the land angle, and the part of the picture above the dotted line being the sky angle of our picture.

In Fig. 56 we show what happens when we raise



Fig. 22.



Fig. 23. Q



R Fig. 24.

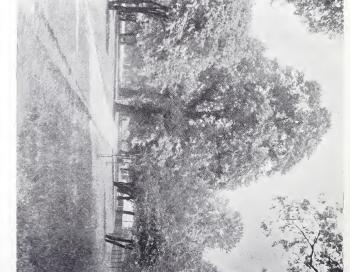
FOREGROURD STUDIES.

F.C.L.

Fig. 26.

Fig. 25.

HIGH VIEW POINT. (p. 49.)

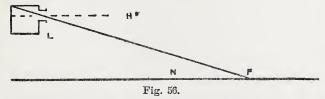


Low View Point. (p. 49.)

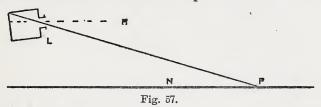
FC.L.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE FOREGROUND

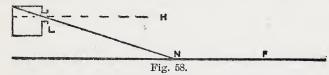
the lens. This gives us F as the nearest point of foreground now shown.



In Fig. 57 we see what happens when instead of raising the lens we keep it central and tilt the camera—a proceeding seldom desirable and not permissible in the case of buildings or near trees. We still have F as the nearest point of land shown.



In Fig. 58 we have lowered the camera nearer the ground and at the same time raised the lens so as to give us N as the nearest point of land. It will at once appear that while the angle HLN is smaller in Fig. 58 than in Fig. 55, yet we have the same amount of foreground in our picture.



Our next study, Fig. 25, shows us the effect of moving the camera a little towards the right hand. We at once see how this entirely re-arranges the marginal line of the path, and see the bad effect of our line coming out at a corner of the picture. The square shape—nearly always undesirable—is accentuated by this nearly diagonal line. Now in this instance we may compare the influence of light and shade on the foreground. In Fig. 25 the sun was high up in the sky and more or less at

our back. This has a flattening effect on the chiaroscuro, and seems to bring all the picture into one plane. Moreover, the large and quite uninteresting foreground seems to have little or no connection with the tree background. picture is empty, devoid of a focus of interest, and lacking in the suggestion of space. In Fig. 26 we have exactly the same subject, but taken at a different time of day, and also from a lower view point. The path margin again runs out at the corner of the picture, but this, though still undesirable, is not so noticeable, because the broad sweep of shadow thrown across the compressed foreground has given it an accentuated interest. This shadow is cast by a large tree at our right, the sun being also to our right. Here we may note how this side lighting gives us a far better suggestion of roundness and relief among the trees, and also places the trees at different distances from us, and not all apparently at the same distance as in Fig. 25.

Further, it should be noted that this shadow has the desirable quality of transparency, and does not consist of a solid black patch, but we are able to see the grass and path and distinguish one from the other. Where the grass has been protected from the sun's burning rays—i.e., near the tree trunk on our right—the grass is darker green and not so sunburnt as it is near the path. This shadow shows us what is known as a broken shadow—i.e., one broken up into little graduated patches of lighter and darker parts according as the grass is

greener or lighter in colour.

In Fig. 25 we may note an intruding branch in the right upper corner. This has been purposely left in the print so that we may point the moral of watchfulness against such intruding fragments. If they cannot be avoided when taking the negative they can be stopped out when printing.

The pictorial importance of the foreground is not likely to be over-estimated by the beginner. We have therefore added two pairs of illustrations in order to draw his attention to the subject. The first pair show us a bit of the shore of one of our English lakes, Figs. 27 and 28. The large tree, to our left, occupies very nearly the same position in

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE FOREGROUND.

both studies, but the small shrub to our right is in Fig. 28 made to hide the boat which we see in Fig. 27. The somewhat straight and ugly boat landing seen in Fig. 27 is advantageously hidden in Fig. 28. The two studies were taken within a few feet of each other, but yet they are so different in general arrangement as to form two separate compositions. For example, in Fig. 27 we see one end of the midlake island. But in Fig. 28 we see the other end of the same island.

These little studies are obviously faulty in various respects, and are here included only as diagrammatic examples to show how slight lateral movement materially alters the arrange-

ment of the foreground.

Our second pair of foreground studies show us a somewhat more complicated subject, vide Figs. 29 and 30. Although these two studies were taken within a few feet of each other they show differences due to three alterations of view point, viz., a movement to one side, a movement forward, and a lower view point. It will quite repay the student to compare these two studies point by point, and notice how such a change of lens position alters the entire foreground. But let him not run away with the notion that the foreground thus re-arranged is limited to a few feet from his tripod. In Fig. 29 observe a small shrub near to and on the left-hand side of the bridge. This hides the nearest corner of the white shed just beyond the bridge. But in Fig. 30 it no longer hides any part of this building at all, but partly hides another one further to our left. Further away still and just over this last-named white building to our left may be seen the top of a tree which in Fig. 29 has practically disappeared. The student will be well advised if he will content himself one afternoon by making a series of say half-a-dozen exposures on the same mid-distance object, but varying the immediate foreground, moving now to one side, now forward, then raising or lowering the camera, and so on.

These half-dozen negatives, if printed and studied, will amply repay him for the time, trouble

and material expended.

Some Pictorial Gleanings from the Illustrations in this Volume.

By THE EDITOR.

ET it be clearly understood that the following notes are not compiled with the idea of "finding fault," or trying to "show off," or anything of that kind at all; but are merely suggestions to our younger readers of the way in which one may look at any picture, with the view to gleaning a hint for one's own guidance.

It goes without saying that this is not the only way, not even the way one ought to first look at a picture. Our first aim should be to try and enjoy its beauties, to try and see "eye to eye" with its author, to aim at discovering why he selected this subject, this point of view, this lighting, etc., and look for the beauties that must have attracted him.

One only need remind our reader of the fact that these pictures have all gained prominent places in our competitions, and are here reproduced in order to show that we see in them all desirable qualities of a high order. That we say little or nothing about their good qualities in many cases is simply because they are immediately evident to any intelligent reader. We can better utilise our space and his time, by drawing his attention to little

things which are not quite so readily seen.

In figures 8 and 9, we have an admirable lesson in chiaroscuro. The same subject is seen under different conditions of lighting. In 9, we have a small part (window and the steps) strongly lighted a somewhat larger part moderately, but not very light (distant part seen through arch), and the rest of the picture in more or less subdued tones, with some accentuated deep shadows towards the upper part of the picture. By this arrangement of light and shade our attention is kept well within its margins. Again, as we pass from the margins towards the centre, the various tones more or less



Fig. 27. Foreground Study. (p. 50.)

F.C I..



Fig. 28. Foreground Study (p. 50.)

F.C.L.



Fig. 29.

Foreground Study. (p. 51.)

F.C.L.



Fig. 30.

Foreground Study. (p. 51.)

F.C.L.

PICTORIAL GLEANINGS FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

go by easy steps, so that there are not jumps from white to black, and black to white. Thus we get an example of concentration and unity of effect in this picture. It also exemplifies that indefinable quality called breadth. The collection of strongest darks in the upper part of the picture, gives it a somewhat top-heavy effect. Stability is usually associated in our minds with a broad base, and with the greater part of the shadow part of the composi-

tion being in the lower part of the picture.

In Fig. 8 we have a quite different quantity and distribution of light. As in Fig. 9, our chief light is the window in the central region. Next to this is a three-quarter light distributed on the pillar to our left. Our half-lights occupy part of the floor and right-hand side, while our three-quarter darks are partly on the floor, partly at the top, and partly central. And our strongest darks are nearly central, and in the upper parts. It will then be seen that in 8 we have not such a harmonious arrangement. For instance, between the window and light on pillar at our left, is a narrow separating dark strip.

Again, the light of the window is isolated from the surrounding lighted parts, by small but strongly marked darks. Then again, the chief central band of pillar on our right, comes between a broad, large half dark, and a narrow, more distant, slightly lighter portion. Thus we find on analysis, that to pass from a light tone to the next lighter, we have to skip over a darker portion. This cutting up effect is one to be avoided as far as possible, because it militates against what Fred Walker called the "oneness" of effect which is such a valuable quality

in all productions of all kinds.

In Fig. 21 we may glean some useful lessons. The first object to catch our eye is the suggestion of light coming in at the window. But as soon as this is perceived the eye is drawn away by a rival light (on the floor) of nearly the same strength. As we cannot advisedly have two captains in command on one ship neither can we desirably have two equally strong highest lights competing for our attention. If now we cover up the light on the floor we at once may see how the remaining high-

light takes command of the situation. The principle of combination or unity is illustrated by the fanlike rib-vaulting converging towards and spreading out from the pillars on our right and left. The principle of mutual help by contrast is shown by the opposition of the chief dark against the light coming in through the window.

In general it is not advisable to repeat these contrasts of strong light and strong dark more than once or perhaps twice in the same composition, as these foci of light and shade tend to weaken each

other if multiplied.

This picture has the valuable property of simplicity of subject and arrangement. The subdued light of the place has kindly subdued many of the details (such as junction lines of stones) which would be more conspicuous in a brightly-lighted interior of

this construction.

In Fig. 7 we have an exceedingly simple, and consequently effective, little study in arrangement of light and shade. We have a chief light, and close to this, separated only by a well-defined line, is our strongest dark. The arrangement of a small strong light with a strong dark is "echo'd" by the steps where the lights gradually fall off in intensity. Moreover our chief captain bright-light has grouped close at hand his lieutenant subordinate lights. The remaining part, though dark, is by no means flat or monotonous, but shows an agreeable gradation (somewhat lost in the reproduction).

A glance will show us that this praiseworthy bit of work owes all its attractiveness to its light and shade qualities. It exemplifies contrast, breadth,

unity, concentration, simplicity.

Fig. 18 is an instance where a part of the charm is due to the sentiment of the subject itself. Our chief fault with this picture is that there is an element of conflicting interests. The brightly-lighted windows which we see is presumably not the chief source of the light falling on the recumbent figure and floor. Consequently we feel that for unity of effect this bright narrow window before us should be considerably subdued. If the reader will cover it up for a moment he will see how our interest is concentrated on the recumbent

PICTORIAL GLEANINGS FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

figure which is, of course, the focus of interest here. This figure has been cunningly arranged to have a dark background and also be relieved by its own cast shadow. The technical quality of the rendering of light and shade on the floor is deserving of much praise but it is very much open to question whether it is quite wise to give so much space-importance to the floor by spreading it out in this way. In a case like this, one usually wishes to suggest a lofty, stately building, and give importance, not to the floor, but to the towering pillars and lofty roof. One feels to want to cut away a strip from the bottom of the picture and add a corresponding strip to the upper part. This composition is inclined to be a little top heavy on account of the large area of dark in the upper part,

and large space of light in the lower half.

In Fig. 11. we have an example likely to interest many of our readers, because the subject is one that we all shall at once recognise as a first cousin to one of our own photographs. Now, pictorially, what are its shortcomings? Take a rapid glance of, say, a couple of seconds, not more—then close your eyes and ask yourself "What did I see?" Your answer probably is "some trees, a bridge and a stream." In this answer you have a useful hint, to the effect that the chief theme of the composition is very probably not sufficiently pronounced. Had your answer been "A large tree overhanging a bridge," or a bridge with some trees behind it, you would have (unconsciously) been expressing the feeling that one or other was the "predominant partner." Now, as a rule-with exception, of course—a picture should have a focus of interest. Some object, feature or phase that is the first to attract our attention. And a focus of interest is very often associated with a concentration of light, or shade, or the two brought together. But in this example (which in certain ways is exceptionally charming) we find our light somewhat scattered. We may thus glean a useful hint as to the value of concentrating or gathering or grouping the lights in a picture.

As a rule where a bridge is introduced we should either see both ends, or feel that both ends are

adequately supported, though the supports may be hidden. The one towards our left seems not quite sufficiently supported. The patch of very light sky along the margin towards the right hand

tends to draw the eye out of the picture.

Fig. 17. prompts us to make a homely compari-In advising a boy with poetic aspirations, most of us would advise him first to learn to write a legible hand of well-formed letters, then learn to put words together in grammatical form-then pass on to the study of style in the acknowledged poets, and finally assay to put his own thoughts into verse, which, by the way, is quite a different thing from rhyme. The same general advice might be offered to the pictorial aspirant in photography. The photograph before us is an exceptionally good example of fine technical work, and we may congratulate its author on his skill, and add that with craftmanship of this kind at his finger ends we shall expect to see a marked advance along poetic (i.e., pictorial) lines in the near future. Now, what is lacking here? The technical quality is good. The composition is admirable. Yet it just falls short of being quite satisfying. Why? Not because it omits anything, but because it says too much.

The poet when describing, let us say, "The words in spring," does not describe every flower, every tree, every feature, but selects and omits. Because what is omitted, by its absence accentuates the

value of what is retained.

Our friend in his picture tells us too much. The foreground, the middle and extreme distance, all are beautiful and claim attention in every part, so that we are bewildered by an embarras de richesses. Like the surgeon, the artist must be cruel to be kind, and sacrifice one part to give strength to How could this be done? By a supanother. pression of detail in that part which was of secondary importance. By the use of perhaps a larger stop, or by putting-let us say the distancevery slightly "out" of focus, or shall we preferably say, giving it a degree of definition not quite so sharp on the near parts we should have concentrated interests, suggested atmosphere and aided the suggestion of relative distances.

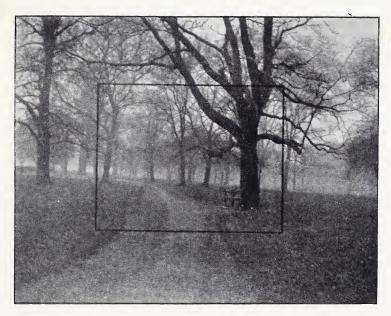


Fig. 31. Lens of Short Focus. (p. 61.)

F.C.L



F.C.L.



Fig. 33.

STUDY IN FOCUSSING. (p. 63.)



Fig. 34.

STUDY IN FOCUSSING. (p. 63.)

F.C.L.

PICTORIAL GLEANINGS FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

The picture admirably illustrates balance of mass, and of line, general breadth of effect, convergence of lines or radiation, and other good

points which we need not particularise.

In Fig. 10 we have several features of interest. The composition as a whole is harmonious in the sense that there are no discordant features. But at the same time it is lacking in cohesion, that is to say we feel that we could remove the bridge, or either of the buildings, or the boat and not miss them. Now one reason for this probably is that the parts are not quite true in tone. For instance, the large central building is too dark considering its distance from us and also taking into account the light on the water and on the ground at our feet. Then again the sky is a little too dark generally when we bear in mind the strength of sky light to give us such a light foreground and so much light on the water. These are comparatively minor departures in the sense that a little more light in the sky and a little less light on the foreground would have brought these two parts into harmony. As a general rule it is not wise to have the horizon line quite so near the middle of the picture. The foreground should be noticed showing how very pictorial a bit of rough broken bank may be. There is a tendency towards the inclusion of too many objects of interest.

Fig. 19 is a particularly useful example in connection with our present subject because it illustrates the far-reaching truth that pictorial effect is very largely a matter of light and shade. The subject itself is characterised by simplicity and the distribution of light and shade well exemplifies breadth. Note that our chief light is in the sky where it nearly always is or should be in a land-scape picture. A part of the water echoes this highlight; our strongest dark is a bit of the support of the plank bridge which though not in actual contact is yet quite near. The margins of the print are wisely kept quiet and free from marked contrast of light and shade. There is an absence of markedly sharp definition, but this softening has

not been carried to an extreme.

In Fig. 16 we have a piece of very creditable work

which shows a good deal of taste and feeling for the pictorial side of the work. Technically, the print is not quite all one could wish, but these matters for the moment interest us less than do

questions of selection and arrangement.

The general impression is distinctly pictorial and fresh, but—there is a but in every photograph—we can imagine the following points improving the general effect. First, the camera was too high up above water level. This spreads out the near part of both land and river too much. A lower view point would have included the same subject, and at the same time compressed the foreground, lowered the horizon (not to be confused with the skyline), and given more importance to the sky and distance. Next we notice that in the right upper corner, we have a heavy, over-solid patch of tree, which seems out of place in a picture of this "open landscape" general character. The sky and cloud, extreme, and middle distance parts, have been admirably managed, so that the various planes of this picture seem to come into their proper relative position. The symmetrical molehill shape of the distant mountain is by no means pictorial, but this could not very well be escaped by the operator. colour of the original is also a little too hot and red. This is evaded in our reproduction. This red colour has been accentuated (not quite wisely we think,) by the greenish colour of the mount.

Fig. 15 shows us a long range of light and shade, and as the chief or strongest high-lights are brought together towards the centre of the picture, and are more or less surrounded by the strongest darks, we get the full effect of accentuated contrasts. In this case, we note that there is a great preponderance of dark over light, which gives a certain vigour and brilliancy to a composition. The middle tones, though all represented, are kept in the back-

ground (in two senses of the word).

The juxtaposition of the extreme ends of the scale has a tendency to rob each of its more delicate gradations. The composition illustrates the principle of unity or fitness, although the little maiden is not entirely convincing as one who has had a very extensive experience. The shelf in the

PICTORIAL GLEANINGS FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

upper part of the picture might advantageously have been simplified by the removal of at least two of the "pans" whose light-catching handles are a little too much in evidence. The strongly accentuated edge of the apron also is an assertive feature not wanted.—A lower viewpoint would have given a better feeling of perspective. The picture helps to exemplify the needed lesson that we need not wander far from home for

subjects.

Fig. 14. In answer to those of our correspondents who occasionally enquire if shiny prints are pictorial, we may say that this is a print as smooth and highly glossed as one can imagine, but that fact had nothing whatever—one way or the other—to do with its gaining a place of honour in the com-The print as it stands is a piece of excellent technique, and very nearly a first-class pictorial result. It shows how the removal of a tiny slice from one side may make a vast difference. Imagine a line from the left-hand side of the two nearest tree trunks drawn to touch the lefthand corner of the three tree trunks. If this line be continued it takes our eye to a solitary small tree trunk near the left margin. Not only are these three tree-groups in a straight line but they are just about equi-distant in the picture space. both undesirable features. But if we cut off or cover up a quite narrow strip along the left margin, only just enough to hide the small, light, distant trunk, both defects are removed at one stroke and the composition vastly improved.

Fig. 12.—We may profitably compare this graceful picture with Fig. 15. In this case our first glance conveys the general impression of a preponderance of the light end of the scale of tones. While the strong darks are only represented by a branch of the tree. The accentuation of the lighter tones gives a general suggestion of delicacy, and elegance, and scattered light as compared with the brilliancy and vigour of the other example. The posing of the figure has several good points but yet is open to improvement. For instance, the position of the arms and hands are too much alike and the edge of the drapery falling from the hands is too straight

for classic grace. The line of drapery towards the back of the figure is better, but might have been a little less vertical.

Fig. 20 is a particularly apt example of a part being better than the whole. For it is an enlargement of a small part of a negative taken with a hand The inscribing of the title and placing of the label are indicative of taste and judgment. The picture is a happy illustration of a point of some importance. Suppose for a moment that the larger archway were closed by doors. The picture would at once have a flat shut-in all-in-one-plane look that is so common in street scenes. But the peep of distance seen through the arch at once suggests space. What that something in the distance may be is of no pictorial consequence whatever, provided that it does not attract attention. An adverse point should be noticed for guidance. The relative nearness of the lady has made her look somewhat too tall when compared with the two men under the archway. This is one of the common faults in figure work with a hand camera. The degree of definition of the architectural details of the gate are happily in harmony with the subject and support the suggestion of an honourable age. There are rather too many scattered high-lights to make a quite restful Those coming up to the margins of the picture might have been subdued with advantage. For it is—as a rule—not desirable to have any feature which is likely to attract attention towards the margins of the composition.

Fig. 15. This is a happy illustration of "breadth" in portraiture. The face, hair, hat, hands, neck and part of the arms are all in broad flat tones, and yet by no means lacking in gradation. In all these parts we have good modelling, with an acceptable absence of patchiness or violent contrasts. The drapery has been quite wisely kept soft and quiet without destroying the suggestion of texture. As to the pose, it is doubtful whether it is possible to get a sharp elbow angle that is entirely satisfactory. Presuming that the figure is the all-important part of this study, it would have been better to have employed a background just a shade or two darker than the one used. But we are in good



Fig. 35

ORDINARY PLATE. (р. бт.)



Fig 36.

ORTHOCHROMATIC PLATE. (p. 61.)

F.C.L.

Fig. 37. UP-HILL EFFECT.

(p. 62.)



F.C.L.



Down-Hill Effect.
(p. 62.)

Fig. 38.

F.C.L.

PICTORIAL GLEANINGS FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

hopes that in the process of reproduction this rather light background will be toned down a little.

The distribution of light and shade in this picture is particularly happy. The flowing lines of the drapery exemplify the principle of continuity and repetition. Many of these rippling lines of the drapery folds are markedly graceful.

PRACTICAL JOTTINGS.

Orthochromatic Plates.—As the general subject of orthochromatic plates will receive detailed attention shortly, we must content ourselves with a very brief and strictly practical note. If our reproductions, Figs. 35 and 36, are fairly satisfactory, they will tell their own tale. Fig. 35 is the result on an ordinary plate, while Fig. 36 is the same view on an orthochromatic plate and pale orange light-filter. The two plates were exposed about 5 p.m. on a moderately bright day in August. The exposures were in the proportion of about 1 to 50.

The bracken-clad hill to our left in Fig. 36 shows us the sunburn tips of the now pale yellow fronds. The pale blue distant hills, all but invisible in Fig. 35, are adequately suggested in Fig. 36, where we also see indications of clouds in the distance. The sun-burnt grass field in the middle distance to our right, is perhaps a little too light in Fig. 36, but it is obviously too dark in Fig. 35. Again, we see very much better general modelling in the trees and differentiation of planes with the ortho plate, and generally the effect of the plate is far more truthful than that obtained with the ordinary plate.

Focal length of Lens.—In Figs. 31 and 32 we have the same view taken with a long and a short focus lens. In the first case (Fig. 31) the lens was of $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch equivalent focus, and for the second exposure this lens was replaced by one of 11 inch equivalent focus. The camera was not moved between the two exposures. The narrow black line round the small central portion of Fig. 31 shows how much subject matter was included and how

much was left out when the lens of longer focus was used. Indeed we may say that the scale of

one picture is just half that of the other.

I think it will be readily conceded that the effect obtained with the longer focus is preferable in every way. The subject was selected as a convenient diagram and not for pictorial features. large-scale picture (i.e., taken with the lens of longer focus) though we have less subject matter included, yet the proportions of the parts give us a better idea of space and size than we get from the more crowded small-scale view. This latter may be taken as an average hand-camera effect, seeing that the proportion of focal length of lens 51 inches to size of plate $(4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4})$ is that in common use. Comparing the two we see how the small-scale picture seems to have the distance dwarfed and rendered almost insignificant when compared with the other view. Had we moved our camera a few yards nearer the nearest tree, so as to have brought the near tree to about the same size in each case, this would have had little or no effect on the distance which would have seemed dwarfed as before.

Up-and-down hill effects.—It is a matter of common knowledge among photographers that when photographing a road or path at a slight angle of inclination it is by no means always easy to say, at a glance, whether our view was taken looking up or down the road. And some little mystery has been made out of what is really a very simple thing. The gist of the matter is that we must have some one or more known horizontal lines whereby to form our estimate of level. If our road be bordered by trees of various sizes it is almost impossible to estimate correctly the degree of inclination. But if we have a building of any kind showing one or more horizontal lines we take these as our standards. In Fig. 37 we are looking up the road. The horizontal lines of the houses and wall opposite are all converging downwards. But the lines of the edges of the pavement are converging upwards. Hence we mentally infer that the point of sight, i.e., lens, was some distance above the foreground. Taking the point of convergence of the top and bottom of the piece of wall to our left in the foreground, we infer that our lens was about on a level with the base of the nearer lamp-post. Thus again we infer the road is rising in this view.

In Fig. 38 we see at once that our view front was some 4 or 5 feet above the ground quite close to us. By taking the point of convergence of the known horizontal lines of the tops of the porticoes, or the portion of stepped wall to our left, we find their point of convergence is just about on a level with the top of the lamp. Thus our horizon is about the top of the lamp and we infer that this roadway is

falling towards the distance.

Focussing for Pictorial Effect.—Let it be said at once that there is no virtue in a blurred image, or vice in a sharply-defined picture, nor can any hard and fast rule be laid down as to how sharp or soft the picture should be. Much depends on the subject, the state of the atmosphere, the effect desired, the lens used, the sight of the person using it, etc. Figs. 33 and 34 may serve to show one or two points in this connection. In the small scale picture, Fig. 33, the bronze figure on the fountain was sharply focussed, and then the lens stopped down until the trees and houses beyond were fairly sharply defined. The result is a wide angle of view, a bewildering mass of tiresome detail, and a lack of relief. The figure does not stand out freely from the tree background. In Fig. 34 the same standpoint was used with a lens of longer focal length. A fairly large aperture was employed, and the chief attention given to the figure, so adjusting the definition of the tree background that its general character was indicated, but that no feature in the background was at all in assertively The result is that the figure and sharp definition. fountain stand out freely relieved as it were, and not confused with the tree background. At the same time, when our attention is given to the background we are in no doubt as to its general nature and character, and feel that it is some appreciable distance beyond the foreground. This again is merely a diagram view chosen simply to illustrate this one point, and nothing further.

A Knowledge of Composition.—One who is a trained and skilled engineer, on seeing some

brilliant example of his craft, will understand the difficulties of the problem attacked, and appreciate the skill, ingenuity and courage needed for its solution; while the ignoramus can only gape and say "wonderful," without understanding in the least where the real difficulties or merits are.

Similarly, a person who has made no study of art, may say of a picture "how beautiful," and yet be entirely blind to the real beauty or merit of the work. He may be chiefly, perhaps wholly, impressed by some feature which one with knowledge could tell us was an optical illusion not intended, or a mark of weakness or ignorance on the part of the artist.

A knowledge of composition—in the larger sense of the term—does not necessarily enable the possessor to "make pictures," but rather to see merits in pictures which he otherwise would miss, and also appreciate the various "points" of the work in their true and relative order. Such knowledge therefore enlarges our mental horizon, and greatly adds to our power of appreciation and enjoyment.

Without a knowledge of art craft, a cultured person can appreciate a work of art as a result, and as a whole, just as an ordinary person can appreciate a watch which keeps good time. But the mechanical mind can further appreciate the ingenuity and skill employed in every part of this good time-keeper. Similarly one with some general knowledge of art can not only enjoy the picture as a finished result, but also appreciate and admire the craftsmanship whereby the admirable results have been obtained.

The would-be-picture-maker in like manner—if he be not already blinded by conceit or ignorance—may glean at least one hint from every one of the world's great paintings. In one instance what to avoid, in another a new suggestion, in a third full confirmation of a lesson elsewhere learned, and so on.

Postscriptum.—Let not the reader think that because he has come to the end of this book he has also come to the end of the subject. On the contrary, this may properly be regarded as an introduction to the subject. We hope to devote another volume to it in due course. [Ed. P.P.]

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--- HEADQUARTERS.

Exposure Notes.

Fig. 7.—July, noon, dull, f/8, Exp. 40 sec.

Figs. 8 and 9.—Dallmeyer 18 in. Stigmatic, f/32, Exp. 30 min.

Fig. 10.—Sep., noon, diffused light, Barnet Ortho and 3 times screen, f/6, Exp. $\frac{1}{8}$ sec.

Fig. 11.—Sep., noon, dull, Kodoid plate and screen, f/8, Exp. ½ sec.

Fig. 12.—Kodoid film, Exp. 1/10 sec.

Fig. 13.—June, dull, Imp. Sp. Rap., f/8, Exp. 3 sec.

Fig. 14.—Aug., Seed plate, f/11, Exp. 10 sec.

Fig. 15.—Imp. Sp. Rap., f/8, 10 sec.

Fig. 16.—Sep., 11 a.m., Barnet Ortho., f/8, Exp. 1/15 sec.

Fig. 17.—June, f/11, Exp. 1 sec.

Fig. 18.—August, Iso plate, f/16, Exp. 20 min,

Fig. 19.—Sep., dull, Kodoid plate and dark screen, f/11, Exp. 25 sec.

Fig. 20.—June, f/8, Exp. 1/35 sec.

Fig. 21.—July, 4 p.m., Barnet Ortho., f/16, Exp. 30 min.

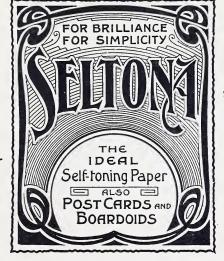
From Messrs. Chas. Zimmermann & Co., comes a bottle of Agfa flash light powder and also a little package of touch paper. Inside the bottle, which is closed by a screw cap, is a small cylindrical measuring glass forming a kind of inside stopper. One-third of a measure full of the powder suffices for a portrait or small group. The powder is placed on a plate or shovel, a strip of touch paper stuck into the heap of powder so that half the paper protudes. When all is ready this touch paper or torch is lighted at the free end by a match. It burns slowly down to the powder—when there is a brilliant flash and the thing is done. We have from time to time made the personal acquaintance of quite a number of "Agfa" friends, and in no single case have they disappointed our expectations. We are, therefore, glad to add this latest link to the magic chain of Agfa specialities.

Postscriptum.—It may be of some slight service to mention the details of one of our test experiments with this remarkable flash-light. Portrait, sallow complexion and auburn hair, black dress, black lace trimming. Dallmeyer stigmatic lens, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch focus, stop $f/6^{\circ}5$. Half-length portrait, head about one inch long. Imperial Special Rapid plate, metol developer. Exposure, just over a half-measure of powder. This was put in a small heap on a biscuit tin lid, and ignited by the touch paper. The light was at one side of the camera, and about six feet away from the sitter. This negative is fully exposed, and shows every detail in the black trimmings and dress. The flash is remarkably quick. The sitter exclaimed "Oh!" at the moment of exposure, but not a trace of movement is visible. We shall have more to say about this flash-light in our volume devoted to flash-light and night work.

Messrs. Aldis Bros. (Old Grange Road, Birmingham), have sent us two excellent photographs of some of their new machinery for automatically turning the cast-iron tools used for lens grinding. This truly wonderful machinery among other things can turn a hollow cup of 24 inches diameter and 5 feet radius—or can turn a sphere no larger than a pin's head. Every provision and precaution is taken against the wear, twist, strain, etc., of the cutting tool, and adjustments are so accurate that any selected spherical surfaced object can be reduplicated to what is practically an unlimited extent. To fully describe this wonderful instrument is not possible in our available space, but to most of our readers it will suffice to say that this new machinery will win fresh laurels for the firm of Aldis Bros., and possibly may also be the means of greatly increasing the out-put and reducing the cost of their widely esteemed lenses.

Messrs. Houghtons, Ltd., seem to have struck some magic vein, for as surely as the months follow each other so does each month bring us some timely novelty. This time it is an elegant little calendar which stands on the table or may be hung up at will. A slip-in quiet green mount enables us to change the view monthly or oftener as we will. We understand that these useful little things may be had in various designs. Certainly the one before us is just all that we can desire.

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- **H.W.** (Skipton).—A. The colour of this print is not very suitable for the subject. Less pronounced colours are generally preferable. The exposure of the negative has been barely sufficient, hence the shadow parts are a little too dark and solid-looking. Composition is rather one-sided. When the mounting papers are used the print should be mounted by one edge only; see fig, 42, The Practical Photographer, No. 4. B. This enlargement suggests a negative which is somewhat too strong in density contrast for this purpose. Hence your picture is too black and white. Your best procedure is to give a longer exposure, use a larger stop and a very dilute developer.
- W. D. A. (Chester).—A very creditable carbon print. Your negative is a little too strong in contrast. But the chief fault is due to improper lighting of subject. You should have used a large sheet at the back of your sitter as a diffusing reflector to throw some light into the shadows which at present are too dark. Try again and also see if you cannot get a somewhat less surprised expression.
- H. N. B. (Hipperholme).—You have got the gable of the building too near the centre of your picture, and there is a very hard sharp line cutting off a triangle in the left lower corner. This looks like a wall or edge of water-fall. It is a mistake to surround your picture with a white border. This takes all the life out of the high-lights. 2. Fancy shapes like ovals, circles, etc., are a mistake, and especially when put diagonally on square mounts. This negative has evidently been under-exposed. It is better to err on the side of over than under-exposure when their is uncertainty.
- J. J. M. (Newark).—1. Quite a mistake to use a large white mount. The white-haired figure with dark face should not have been looking at the camera. The ivy does not seem quite natural. It is very doubtful if any really reverently religious pictures can be made by photography. One is always so conscious of the models being dressed up and pretending. 2. "No record" rather indicates neglect or carelessness. The greatest help you can have is a carefully kept note book. This negative has been over-developed for the printing process employed. The sky is blank white paper. 3. This is much the best of the three in every way, and only requires the introduction of a suggestion of cloud to make a very pleasing picture. It would look better if printed on a paper of somewhat rougher surface.
- Miss C. (Barnstaple).—The faces in both portraits are very fairly correct, but the pinafore is quite at fault—flat, white, and entirely devoid of detail and gradation. You have carried development much too far and got solid high-lights. Hydrokinone has this tendency, and is not very suitable for portraiture. Try again and aim at a much softer negative and do not use such a very clean pinafore.
- J. J. R. (Glasgow).—In general we think it is a mistake to print land or sea-scapes with white margins, but if it is to be done we certainly prefer the vignette rather than the sharp-edged mask. Both prints are very pretty little bits chosen with taste. We think the colour rather too red to suit either subject. We suggest your printing these negatives right out to the edge and aiming for a warm black or sepia tone. The cloud part of the sea piece is particularly good.
- H.J.S. (Handsworth).—Technically very good. Pictorially too formal, *i.e.*, object too central. It was a mistake to use a mask and surround your print with a large border of white paper. As a rule we think it unwise to use a mask.
- A. E. B. (Hitchin).—Sky part too light in comparison with other portions. Mid-distant hills to our left are too dark. These excessive contrasts you have made worse by surrounding your print with wide white border. 2. Distant land much better, but sky still too light. Sea also too much like paper. 3. Land in mid-distance very much too dark. 1. Line of hills too sharply defined, and boats do not stand away sufficiently from background. 2. View point too high above water level. The post is too near right-hand margin. 3. Much the best composition. Sky defective in all cases and not true in tone relation.

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A2	48	duffel gray	A02	32	B2	36	duffel gray	B02	24		
A3	48	gray bark	A03	32	B3	36	gray bark	B03	24		
A4	48	playfield cream	A04	32	B4	36	playfield cream	B04	24		
A5	48	rough white	A05	32	B5	36	rough white	B05	24		
A6	48	dove	A06	32	B6	36	dove	B06	24		
A7	48	deep sea blue	A07	32	B7	36	deep sea blue	B07	24		
A8	48	autumn brown	A08	32	B8	36	autumn brown	B08	24		
A9	48	smoke gray	A09	32	B9	36	smoke gray	B09	24		
A10	48	fern green	A010	32	B10	36	fern green	B010	24		
A11	48	coffee	A011	32	B11	. 36	coffee	B011	24		
A12	48	wine red	A012	32	B12	36	wine red	B012	24		
A13	48	black	A013	32	B13	36	black	B013	24		
A14	48	olive green	A014	32	B14	36	olive green	B014	24		
A15	48	iron gray	A015	32	B15	36	iron gray	B015	24		
A16	48	russet	A016	32	B16	36	russet	B016	24		
A17	48	slate	A017	32	B17	36	slate	B017	24		
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- F.G.P. (Crumlin).—3. Strong reflections in water are seldom if ever satisfactory in a photograph, though often attractive in nature. Your print is too red in colour for the subject. The edge of the pool, wall, etc., run parallel with margin of print. See note on Fig. 20, p. 37. 1. Weak part in the sky, which towards our left seems too assertively white paper. The other patch to our right is equally wrong, but not quite so assertive. The print is worth quite working up.
- **G.E.F.** (Northfleet).—All your work shows pictorial taste, but your prints are not as technically good as one could wish. You must not neglect technique for pictorial considerations; both should go hand in hand; one is not a substitute for the other. Please put your name and address on back of *each* print. 1. Too strong in contrast. 2. Same fault as 1; perspective too strongly pronounced (see notes on Fig. 31 and 32). 3. This does not look quite right for misty morning. The colour of print does not suit the subject.
- J.A. (Southend).—In many ways a very excellent photograph. Your chief faults are—1st, a blank paper sky, and 2nd, selecting a point of view showing so many objects of interest. Your picture is over-crowded with material, barns, sheds, etc., and these cut it up into a lot of eye-irritating patches. If you could sweep away all these sheds, etc., your picture would be twice as interesting. Simplicity is essential for strong work.
- C.T. (Harrogate).—You make a mistake in sending so many prints at a time. Better to pick out what you think best and then go forward from that point. You are inclined to include too much subject, too many objects. Do not aim at getting as much, but as little as you can in your picture. Pictures taken from an elevated position are very seldom satisfactory. Do not cut a boat in the way shown in what you call "A Study." It looks like a print which has been over-trimmed.
- **S.F.H.** (Chester).—This print suggests a negative which has been overexposed. The distance is too much out of focus to be agreeable. The distance should appear slightly softened, but not blurred. Mount paper an excellent colour. 2. This is very much better in every respect (except the bilious mount). The patch of stray light of sky is faulty. Rub the film down with rag, moistened with methylated spirit. This print would be improved by dipping in strong coffee. 3. Unpleasantly red. Sky quite wrong (blank). The white margin is also a mistake. Exposure and development the best of the three.
- J.H.S. (Leeds).—Very nearly being very good. The following require your careful attention. Sky a trifle too strong. Print rather too red in colour. Contrast of light and shade of houses in middle distance a little too strong. This can be got over to a very great extent by slight retouching and careful scraping.
- W.M. (Newcastle)—The fault here seems more in the print than the negative. There is a fogged flat look about the print which is not satisfactory. Try some other printing process. 2. Contrasts of light and shade excessive. Exposure not quite enough; but chief fault is over-developing. Reduce negative with ammonium persulphate. See p. 56, Practical Photographer, No. 7, "After treatment, etc." It was a mistake to include the boat. 3. The best of the three. You have slightly over-printed. Try again, and aim at getting the clouds just to show, and at the same time retain transparency in the darkest shadows.
- H.S.P. (Bradshaw).—Try again and get the upper part of sky just a trifle darker than lower part; also nearer part of foreground a trifle darker than mid-distance by shading printing frame during printing. Use a piece of card with edges cut into teeth, and keep it moving during the extra exposure.

 2. Too many objects of about equal interest. Try the experiment of covering up about 1½ inches of right side and ½ inch at left side. The art of picture making is chiefly the art of leaving out everything that you can possibly do without.

 3. Very nearly being very good indeed. The quality is excellent but your foreground is not pictorial. Your chief (foreground) object is an ugly lot of dark lines. The picture would have been vastly better without the submerged tree.
- **D.C.** (Dunfermline).—1. Chief fault here is general flatness in darker tones. This is probably due to the original negative having been underexposed. 2. An excellent group, but sky is white paper and sadly needs suggestion of atmosphere. The ground also is too light. 3. Technically better because it shows a better range of gradation. It is at present a little too chalky in the lighter tones. Try a little longer exposure and dilute your developer.

xii.

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- W. H. R. (Bolton).—Your transgression by sending four prints ruts you out of the competition. We are obliged to debar rule breakers in fairness to rule observers. 1. Technically very creditable, light also is pleasing. Subject would repay enlarging. 2. Not nearly so good; view point too high. High lights lacking in gradation. You have probably over-developed. The chair leg spoils the composition. 3. Nearly good, but too harsh in contrast of light and shade. Window in distance is too light. Bub this down on the film and let the light on your door-step be your chief light. The straight line of the half door is a hard line far too near the centre. The open-door idea is being over-worked just now, and is getting wearisome by constant repetition. Mounting in general good taste, but beware of white lines.
- H. C. J. (Birkenhead).—Your study of a pulpit shows commendable care and neatness. Do not use round cornered masks or indeed any masks for architecture. The white gas globes and small desk frontal should have been removed as they form undesirably light patches. The great thing to aim at in architectural pictures is simplicity of arrangement and breadth of lighting.
- **E. F.** (Thornton Heath).—Composition largely spoiled by inclusion of tomb in foreground. Lighting of the picture is somewhat flat, *i.e.*, lacking suggestion of light and shade. As a rule a dull day is not very suitable for architectural exteriors of a complicated character, or where there is much detail, carving, etc. Your print is rather too red to suit the subject. Work generally is neat and careful.
- H. C. H. (Rotherham).—Your work shows very considerable promise, with indications of pictorial taste combined with technical quality above average. The white surround to the print is a mistake as it degrades the high-lights of your print by force of comparison. There are one or two spots in the print which suggest clear spots in the negative, probably the result of air bells clinging to the film during development. The patch of light in the distance above the stalls should be subdued by rubbing the negative film with a bit of clear rag just moist (not wet) with methylated spirit.
- J. S. (Birmingham).—1. No advantage in using such a small stop. A larger stop would have enabled you to put the background into soft focus and would have greatly improved the result. 2. The only suggestion here is the use of a rather darker mount, so as to give a little brightness to the sky part. 3. The two figures are conflicting elements. Far better cut away that to the left and print a shade darker. Generally excellent.
- C. B. A. (London).—1. As good as you could expect with such lighting, etc. Your print is far too cold in colour for such a strong sunlight effect. Make a stronger print and then tone to warm colour by hot hypo and alum bath. 2. You have done the best you could, but the spotty, patchy, stripy nature of the subject is dead against you.
- **A. F. P.** (Canonbury).—Your titles are a little too conspicuous. 1. The white line on mount round print is a mistake. Near water much too white and suggestive of paper. Stain on light patch makes us suspect use of acid mountant. 3. You have included far too many objects of interest. This is a common, but serious mistake. Technically very good. Stiffen your mounting paper by pasting it down on to stout eard before putting the print on it. Those flimsy paper mounts are not only untidy, but suggest that you yourself do not think the print is worth troubling about.
- E. H. (Strawberry Hill).—1. Retained. 2. The "hang-dog" expression and pose of your sitter is not very attractive. Your tendency is to get your shadows stoo solid. For instance the shadow along the cheek edge and chin is not suggestive of the shadows or flesh. 3. Arms and face are hard and lacking in modelling. Skull is good, but other parts are hard and flat. The arms are too sprawling and seem inordinately long. Her left arm, which really is a very unimportant factor in the idea or picture, is made the most prominent feature.
- **J. G. K.** (Croydon).—Both of exceptionally good technical quality. You must now give chief attention to pictorial arrangement. Our next number contains some valuable hints concerning the use of animals in landscape. This is a branch of work you might take up as a speciality. It is full of pictorial possibilities, and has hitherto been greatly neglected. 2. This requires a darker and rather larger mount.



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- **B.S.N.** (Mallaig).—Please do not send prints for different competitions in one package. 1. An exceedingly interesting church building appears to be falling backwards because the camera was tilted, and the film not in vertical plane. This is essential in architecture. Exposure hardly sufficient. 2. "Feeding time" not sufficiently developed. Note that a print looks a full shade darker when dry than when wet, so make allowance for this when developing. Sky much too dark. 3. Harbour very encouraging. A picturesque bit. Sky good. Foreground not quite plucky enough. Spots on print suggest need for greater care.
- J. R. (Grangetown).—You do not seem to have allowed sufficiently for the difference between a wet and dry print, the latter being a full shade darker. It is exceedingly difficult to catch a laugh or smile that does not look "wooden." It is far better to aim at a quieter expression, especially with children. 1 is better than 2. This colour of tissue suits only a very small number of subjects. Warm blacks, sepias, browns, etc., are more useful colours.
- H. J. M. (Shrewsbury).—The first thing that strikes us is the very vivid colour of two of your mounts. These quite overpower the prints. This is a grave mistake. When a picture is well mounled, one should not notice the mount at all, but be pleased with the general result. I. Print itself very creditable. All it needs is the sky shading down a trifle. 2. Water and sky practically blank paper. This is not true to nature. Bank of large-leaved plants to right very good indeed. 3. Quite the best of the three in every way, but even here the colour of the mount is a little too pronounced, especially with a purple tissue. Try a dark quiet grey like that for Fig. 15 in *Practical Photographer*, No. 15.
- W. H. R. (Bolton).—Congratulations on success in printing carbon by incandescent gas. Woodland path partly spoiled by awkward tree trunk along right margin. Sky also too evenly light, otherwise good. Cloister doorway somewhat spotty. These should have been touched out on print. A strong front light like this is seldom quite satisfactory from the pictorial standpoint. Autumn morning retained. You will certainly "come along" in due time. You have pictorial taste and only require more practice and experience.
- T. O. G. (Newcastle).—Ploughing. The long straight hard sky line cuts your picture too nearly into equal parts to be quite pleasant. This part does not look distant enough. The simplicity of the subject is very attractive. Seascape. What has happened to make the horizon so very obviously depart from the horizontal? The print generally is somewhat flat and lacking in brightness—due probably to not developing quite far enough. Eden's banks.—This goes a little too far the other way and is a little too bright in contrast, almost suggesting snow rather than midsummer. All things considered this is the best of the three and nearly very good.
- M. I. C. M. (Kirkby-Stephen)—Foxgloves—Technically creditable but pictorially discounted by too conspicuous lines of light railings. Friends.—An ugly white patch above horse's left ear is irritating. Figure very faulty. Looks too much like a ghostly doll. Is flat, lacking in roundness, gradation, modelling. This is largely due to sun being at (or near) your back. Ground rises up too much, caused by your being too near and by lens being too high from ground. Study note on foreground in this number, p. 47.
- J. W. H. (Grangetown).—"In Memoriam" is your best result in every way. It is perhaps just a trifle too solid and opaque in the shadows. The mount is too small and too much the same colour as the print. 2. Contrasts are a little too pronounced to be quite satisfactory, and you have too many scattered strong lights. You have evidently considerably under-exposed this negative. 3. This is too black and white. The table seems too small for a person to sit at and lean upon. The general arrangement and pose do not seem quite natural or comfortable. Try again, and hang up a sheet on the wall opposite the window. This will diffuse the light and soften the blackness and hardness of the shadows. Do not carry development of negative quite so far and give the figure a little more space in the picture. His head is too near the centre of the print.
- W. T. H. (Bitlis)—Your highly-commended print of Thebes is excellent, but the surrounding margin of blank paper somewhat overpowers it. The print should have been trimmed and put on a fairly dark mount. This would

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½-page do.	42	5		2	2		2	ō	6		18	3
1-page do.	1	5	0		3	9	1	2	6		1	3

SPECIAL POSITIONS BY ARRANGEMENT.

* * *

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xvii.

have greatly helped in suggestion of strong sunlight. 2. Landscape. San remarks here also largely apply. Your shadows are a little too sober-look in The sun being so much to your back gives a somewhat flat (reliefless) loo Sea piece.—Boat too central. Picture generally too strong in contrast for pictorial purposes. The print is quite overpowered by the desert of surrounding blank paper.

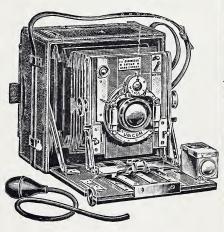
- H. S. P. (Bradshaw).—Technically creditable. Pictorially not satisfactory Too many scattered high-lights. With such a complicated sky one wants a ver simple land part. 2. Here the simpler, quieter sky is far more effective. This is the best of the three prints, and would be greatly improved by removal of \(\frac{2}{3} \) include from lower margin. 3. Not such a pleasant colour as No. 2. The picture also lacks brightness. You have probably not made sufficient allowance for the difference between a wet and a dry print. The subject is one of considerable interest.
- T. C. (Paisley).—You are evidently a very careful, neat and painstaking worker. This is sure to tell in time. Sylvan Path—General effect somewhat monotonous. Print and mounting papers all too near each other in general tone. This gives a flat and feeble general impression. The small scale (not size) of the print is against it. The subject is one which needs enlarging. Technically excellent. Westward Ho!—You are in danger of overdoing the mounting papers. They are too much the same width, and not quite true, (square and straight). The picture itself is excellent except that the lower part of the dark band of cloud is a little too dark. This could be put right by use of ground glass varnish on glass side of negative.
- W. B. (Preston).—Sky and mid-distance patch of grass too white, too paper-like. Best part is the distant clump of trees. You omit to give details of negative, which we should say had been somewhat over-developed. The contrasts are too strong even for carbon printing, which requires a plucky, bright negative. The grass in the near foreground is also very poor.
- W. M. (Newcastle.)—Your prints are very uneven in quality. Ripon—Generally too dark. Either over-printed or not developed far enough. This is more like a night than day effect. We should prefer a simpler mount. 2. Fountains—Building seems leaning inwards on both sides of us. Are you sure the back of your camera was quite vertical? Sky part needs a little toning down in the upperpart. It is too much all one tint at present. Technically, very fair. Screen—Quite the best of the three, but the flimsy, cockling mounting lost you some marks. In judging, everything is taken into consideration, and sometimes a little thing like this decides the question between two evenly balanced prints.
- J. C. B. (Derby).—Compared with your last lot, they are certainly better, both technically and pictorially. 1. No advantage in using such a small stop. It would have been better to have allowed the distant part to be just slightly softened in definition. The horse is too near the exact centre. 2. It was a mistake to include two groups of sheep of about equal numbers, size, and interest. Trim away the group on our left. 3. Yes, dogs are wayward sitters very often, and require a good stock of patience. The pose is too stiff, reminding us of the small boy's definition "a dog is a square animal with one leg at each corner." Our next number is full of good "tips" about animal work.

The Book of Photography, Part 6., deals with enlarging, copying, and making lantern slides and working-up prints in various ways. Part No. 7 deals with the history and manufactory of lenses. The chemical action of light and other allied chemical problems are discussed.

Photograms of the Year (1904) is an Annual that we always look forward to with interest and pleasure. The number before us is on the same general lines as its worthy predecessors. The literary contributors are:—R. Demachy, H. M. Lamb, A. H. H. Griffiths, S. Hartmann, H. S. Ward, A. C. R. Carter, etc. In a work of this kind where so many illustrations are included one cannot be surprised to find a considerable range of pictorial quality. But on the whole the selection indicates a discriminative judgment, and no present-day student of pictorial photography can afford to be without Photograms of the Year.

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on Bromide Papers, etc., may be obtained in a variety of ways, but very few of them are really satisfactory to the Amateur. Hypo-Alum gives a good colour, but the great drawback is the time taken, which may vary from half an hour to 24 hours. Beautiful tints may be obtained by Copper Toning, but tints may be obtained by Copper 1 oning, but these are by no means permanent, and a warm brown may, in the course of a few weeks, become a sickly yellow or a rusty green. The Uranium Bath, again, gives excellent results, but these can hardly be termed permanent, and it is difficult to obtain the same results every time.

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